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UNITED STATES CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MONOGRAPH SERIES XII

DOMINICANS IN EARLY FLORIDA

By
THE VERY REV. V. F. O'DANIEL, O.P., S.T.M., Litt. D.

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FOREWORD

In point of thrill, interest, heroism, and human advancement, the discovery of our western hemisphere by Christopher Columbus, under Spanish patronage, in 1492 is one of the great outstanding facts of the world's history. Another such fact is the part played in the civilization of the aborigines of Hispanic America by the Religious Orders. Although they were not the first on the scene, the Friars Preacher were among the leaders in the great work of instructing and christianizing the Indian. They toiled and labored from ocean to ocean, and from Mexico to the Argentine Republic. Everywhere they were the red man's staunchest and most uncompromising friends. This fact, there can be little doubt, is one of the reasons why they occupy so conspicuous a place in the early history of that extensive portion of the New World. Another reason, of course, is the zeal, industry, and self-denial with which they carried on their apostolate.

There are those who claim that the early Friars Preacher in Spanish America pursued their defense and protection of the simple, untutored natives too far. In the mind of the writer of these pages their efforts in that regard form some of the brightest chapters in the annals of Christianity. It is not necessary here to discuss Spanish heartlessness towards the Indians. Suffice it to say that the enemies of Spain and the Church have gone beyond all measure on that point. Fortunately, a long-delayed reaction has begun to manifest itself. Let us hope that this reverse tendency may not also be carried too far, for the truth perhaps lies near the midway.

The aborigines of Latin America fared much better at the hands of the Spaniards than did those of the present United States at the hands of its English-speaking conquerors. Yet it can hardly be denied that, as is always the case under similar conditions, there was not a little useless cruelty practised against the red man in the countries which lie to the south of us. It was to stem such a tide of destructive oppression that the Friars Preacher consecrated all their energy. They strove in every way to suppress it. To us it seems a plain truth that the fact that there are today so many Indians in the various Hispanic American republics is in no small measure due to the efforts of the sons of Saint Dominic to protect the weak, uncivilized forefathers of that race. We need say no more in honor of these valiant missionaries from the points of view of charity, benevolence, and philanthropy.

In addition to their splendid work in behalf of the liberty and temporal welfare of the Indians and also in the cause of education, the Friars Preacher left nothing undone for the conversion of these natives to Christianity. Indeed, despite the frequent political revolutions which have visited those fair lands, the impress of the labors of those missionaries is still discernible throughout Latin America.

It was not long before these same brave spiritual soldiers turned their eyes towards the aboriginal inhabitants of the country which now forms the southern and southeastern United States. These peoples likewise they longed to protect from the horrors of slavery, as well as to bring them into the fold of Christ. As a matter of fact, there is every reason to believe that this twofold zeal of the sons of Saint Dominic caused them to be chosen more than once as the missionaries who should accompany their compatriots on expeditions for the purpose of planting Spanish colonies within the present limits of our country. Although the efforts of the Fathers, because of the circumstances, proved unsuccessful, they are none the less heroic, glorious, and edifying for that. No others could have done more under the same conditions.

The Franciscans also, and perhaps even other Religious Orders, looked wistfully towards the same field of apostolic activity. The former, in fact, tried their hands there more than once. In the end, under more favorable environments, they were the first Order to succeed in old Florida. They, the Jesuits, and the Dominicans watered the soil with the martyr's blood. However, on the one hand, the very character of this work rather limits it to the last mentioned. On the other, an attempt to take in more might not only have led us too far afield of our subject, but also drawn out the book to undue length. It is for this reason that only an occasional mention is made of other Floridian missionaries. Moreover, the reader must bear in mind that the Florida of which we have written is not at all limited to the peninsula now known by that name. It includes the vast territory which the Spanish conquerors so designated.

The authors consulted were many. A number of them are not included in the bibliography, for the reason they were second-hand writers who throw no new light on the subject. Indeed, some of those mentioned there belong to that class, and are given either because they have been referred to so often that not a few consider them sources of genuine merit; or because they make an effort to locate various points of the United States reached by

these harvesters of souls. At least one of the names found in the list will show that not even the most biassed, virulent, and unreliable historians were overlooked. While such writers can not be trusted as a rule, they at times help to establish a date or a fact, or lead to a discovery of value; and all these things are worth the trouble it takes to obtain them.

The merit of the present work must, of course, be left to the kindly judgment of its readers. Our only claim is that, after much study, we have done the best we could under the circumstances in order lay before them, in the true light of history, the twenty-odd Friars Preacher sketched in its pages. Of practically none of them have we had more than a few words in English—at least not in a consecutive course. The plan of biographical outlines was adopted because it seemed better adapted to bring out the character of these early missionaries within our borders. Besides, by showing the companions of those of whom little or nothing personal could be learned, the surroundings in which they labored, and the principles by which they were guided, this method had a decided advantage in showing what manner of men the least known of them really were. After all, it is in human beings that the greater number of us are interested, rather than in any mere cold record of facts. The task of writing a fuller and more complete history of the stirring Catholic events in old Florida is left for some future scholar. We have but touched on one phase of the drama.

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The Dominican House of Studies,
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Washington, D. C., June 29, 1930.

DOMINICANS IN EARLY FLORIDA

FATHER ANTHONY DE MONTESINOS AND COMPANIONS

FATHER DE MONTESINOS[1]

The labors of the Dominicans must ever shine with luster in the annals of early Latin America. Even non-Catholic writers usually give them unstinted praise. Their zeal carried them in every direction and into all parts. Many historians, not without reason, are of the opinion that missionaries of the Order accompanied the Spanish adventurers in their first attempts to take possession of the country which now forms the southeastern portion of the United States. Some have thought that Friars Preacher were with John Ponce de Leon when he discovered Florida in 1512 or 1513. Championship of the natural rights of the Indians led to their selection as spiritual ministers on these more northern enterprises. However, the earliest of the Dominican athletes of the Faith known by name to touch on our shores were Father Anthony de Montesinos, Father Anthony de Cervantes, and a lay Brother called Peter de Estrada.

Father Anthony de Montesinos was a native of Spain; but the date of his birth, or in what part of that country he first saw the light of day, we have not been able to learn. Evidently in early youth he entered the Order of Saint Dominic at historic Saint Stephen's Convent, Salamanca, where he made his Religious

[1]SOURCES: Charlevoix, Pierre F. X., S.J., "Histoire de L'Isle Espagnole, ou de S. Domingue," 4 vols., Amsterdam, 1733, II, 110-130, 290-291; Cuervo, Justo, O.P., "Historiadores del Convento de San Esteban de Salamanca," 3 vols., Salamanca, 1914, I, 26-30, 49-50, 757, and II, 44-47; Davila y Padilla, Augustin, "Historia de la Fundación y Discurso de la Provincia de Santiago de Mexico de la Orden de Predicadores," Madrid, 1596, pp. 33 and *passim;* Fernandez Alonso, "Historia Eclesiastica de Nuestros Tiempos," Toledo, 1611, pp. 19-26; Groot, José Manuel, "Historia Eclesiastica y Civil de Nueva Granada," 5 vols., Bogota, 1889-1893, I, 7-8; Helps, Arthur, "The Spanish Conquest in America," New York-London ed., 1900-1904, 4 vols., I, II, III, *passim;* Herrera y Tordesillas, Antonio de, "Historia General de los Hechos de los Castellanos en las Islas y Tierra Firme del Mar Oceano," Madrid, 1601-1615, 4 vols., I, decade 1, chap. XI, 279-280, and chap. XIII, 323-326, and II; decade 3, Chap. XI, 164, and decade

profession on July 1, 1502.[2] Eight years later (1510), he was one of the first four Friars Preacher sent to labor in the New World, discovered by Christopher Columbus less than two decades before. This fact alone reveals the character of the man, as well as shows the high regard in which he was held by his brethren in the home land. The other three members of the little band of missionaries were Father Peter de Cordova, Father Bernard de Santo Domingo, and a lay Brother whose name we could not ascertain. De Cordova, though a young man, held the position of superior.

The four messengers of Christ debarked on the Island of Hispaniola, now known as Haiti, for the Spaniards had not yet gained

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4, Chap. VIII, 90; Las Casas, Bartolomé de, "Historia de las Indias," 5 vols., Madrid, 1875 (II, 273-275, III, 361-375); Lowery, Woodbury, "The Spanish Settlements within the Present Limits of the United States, 1513-1561," New York-London, 1911, pp. 164-168, 447-452, 478; MacNutt, Francis Augustus, "Bartholomew de Las Casas, His Apostolate, and His Writings, "New York-London, 1909, *passim;* Melendez, Juan, O.P., "Tesores Verdaderos de las Indias en la Historia de la Gran Provincia de San Juan Bautista del Peru de la Orden de Predicadores," 3 vols., Rome, 1681 1682, I, 10-15; Navarrete, Martin Fernandez, "Coleccion de los Viages y Descubrimientos que Hicieron por Mar los Españoles desde Fines del Siglo XV," 5 vols., Madrid, 1825-1837, III, 69-74; Oviedo y Valdes, Gonzalo Fernandez de, "Historia General y Natural de las Indias, Islas y Tierra-Firme del Mar Oceano," 4 vols., Madrid, 1851-1855, III, 627-630; Remesal, Antonio de, O.P., Historia General y Particular de la Provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala," Madrid, 1620, pp. 9-10, 35-37, 52-53, 85; Robertson, William, "The History of America," 2 vols., London, 1777, I, 215 ff; Shea, John Gilmary, "History of the Catholic Church in Colonial Days," New York, 1886, pp. 101-108, and his "Ancient Florida," in Winsor, Justin, "Narrative and Critical History of America," II, 240-241 (Boston-New York, 1886); Steck, Francis B., O.F.M., "The Joliet-Marquette Expedition," Washington, 1927, pp. 8-9; Thacher, John Boyd, "Christopher Columbus, His Life, His Works, His Remains," 3 vols., New York-London, 1903-1904, I, 117, 134; Touron, Antoine, O.P. "Histoire Générale de L'Amérique depuis Sa Découverte," 14 vols.; Paris, 1768-1770, I, 213, 240-248, 253-255, 320-321; Valladares, Antonio, "Historia Geografica, Civil y Politica de la Isla de Puerto Rico," Madrid, 1788, pp. 101-102.

The "Historiadores" of Father Justin Cuervo is simply a publication of three manuscript histories of Saint Stephen's Convent, Salamanca, Spain. The first is from the pen of Father Alphonsus (Alonso) Fernandez, and forms the first half of Volume I of Cuervo. It was written early in the seventeenth century. The second story of the convent forms the second half of Cuervo's Volume I, and the first half of Volume II. It is the work of Father John de Araya, who wrote towards the end of the seventeenth century. The first part of the third history is by Father Joseph Barrio, and forms the second half of Volume II of Cuervo; while the second part of it is by Father Jerome de Quintana, and forms Volume III of Cuervo. These two last authors wrote simultaneously and early in the eighteenth century. It was a co-operative work.

[2]Father Alphonsus Fernandez ("Historiadores," I, p. 49) places Father Anthony de Montesinos' profession in 1501. But Father John de Araya (*ibid.*, I, p. 757, and II, pp. 45, 47) corrects this error, and gives the date noted in the text.

a foothold on the mainland. Through other arrivals the number of Friars Preacher on the mission was soon increased three or four fold. True to their vocation of saving souls, their hearts were aflame with zeal to bring the natives to a knowledge and the service of God. With this desire ever uppermost in their minds, no sooner did they fully realize the enslavement and merciless oppression to which the Indians were often subjected by the conquerors than they determined to leave nothing undone in order to stem the tide of cruelty. Although he was not the superior of his confrères, and was perhaps one of the youngest amongst them, Father Anthony de Montesinos took a leading part in declaring a crusade of justice, charity, and humanity in behalf of the helpless aborigines. Indeed, he was chosen to initiate the attack on the brutal treatment accorded the natives.

Here again we have an indication of the character of the man, no less than a proof of the great esteem and confidence which he enjoyed among the Fathers. It seems to have been in 1511 that he became an outstanding champion of the cause of the Indians. His activities in their favor ceased only with death some twenty years later.

De Montesinos was not only a soldier of Christ, fearless in the interests of right, but also an able man, a scholar, and an orator of rare eloquence. His strong, scathing sermons against the enslavement and oppression of the red man brought consternation to the wealthy and the civil authorities in Haiti. Nay, they stirred the colony to its very foundations. The antagonism they aroused brought him and his companions no end of trouble, even hardships. Accusations were lodged against them in the home land; efforts were made to starve them in Hispaniola; they were declared disturbers of the peace, enemies of the settlement, and obstacles to its prosperity. Threats of violence were not infrequent.

But these brave men of God had calculated the cost of their championship of human souls and human rights, for they knew well that it would enkindle intense enmity and the strongest antagonism. No persecution could silence them. Nor threats, nor privations, nor hardships, nor danger could induce them even to moderate their efforts in defense of a downtrodden race that could not defend itself. It was a noble cause in which they were ever ready to sacrifice life itself. More than once Fathers de Montesinos and de Cordova journeyed back to Europe that they might plead the case of the American aborigines before the Spanish court. To form a clear idea of the courage, determination, and

heroic zeal shown in these endeavors we must remember the time and suffering, no less than the peril, involved in so long an ocean voyage at that remote period. It is no matter for surprise that both these apostolic men should have been officially declared defenders and protectors of the Indians, a title which must ever remain to their honor on the pages of history.

De Montesinos and de Cordova established a precedent and prepared the way for that glorious apostolate through which their Order accomplished so much good for religion, civilization, and the Indian in Spanish America. True history tells of the work of the Frairs Preacher there in terms of glowing praise, which is richly deserved. The world has no brighter annals. Faithfully, untiringly, fearlessly did they mold a principle whose fruit may be seen in the fact that today the red man is found in far greater numbers in the Latin republics of the New World than in our own United States of America, where we boast so loudly of our freedom and independence. Indeed, the aborigines have been better preserved in those southern lands than even in the Dominion of Canada. In season and out of season were these brave ambassadors of Christ the friends of a weak, untutored people who could not protect themselves. They recoiled before no obstacle, hardship, or danger.

Through their sermons, pleas, and arguments the Friars Preacher soon won over the world-famed Bartholomew de Las Casas to their doctrine of the inborn and inalienable right of the Indians to liberty. He was the first priest ordained in the western hemisphere, and had himself been the owner of slaves. Later he became a Dominican that he might the more effectively promote the cause of freedom for the American aborigines. De Montesinos, there can be no doubt, played a noble part in this conversion. So was he certainly instrumental in influencing Las Casas to enter his Order. Some writers think Father Peter de Cordova died in 1521. If that be the correct date of his death, since de Montesinos succeeded the saintly man as superior, it must have been the subject of this sketch who gave de Las Casas the Religious habit in 1522. It was an act of which any one might be justly proud.

Brave Father Anthony de Montesinos was the first man publicly to denounce slavery and to preach human liberty on this side of the Atlantic Ocean. His sermons, as has been stated, embittered the hearts of many to the point of danger; but he was of the mettle of which martyrs are made. The years 1513, 1516,

and 1518 are variously given as the date when he escaped such a crowning of his zeal only by an accident. He left Haiti (the part of the island now called San Domingo) with Father Francis de Cordova and a lay Brother by the name of John Garces for a part of Venezuela then known as Cumaná that they might evangelize the natives of that region of the mainland. On the way de Montesinos became dangerously ill, and had to be left on the Island of San Juan, the first name given to Puerto Rico by its white conquerors.

The other two missionaries continued their journey to Cumaná, where they were received in a friendly manner by the natives. A rustic chapel of bark and branches of trees was soon erected for them. The work of conversion then began in earnest. At this juncture a band of Spanish marauders appeared on the same coast. The cacique, his wife, and a number of his subjects were inveigled aboard the boat in the belief that the newcomers were friends of the clergymen. Then they were seized and carried away prisoners. Quite naturally the Indians of Cumaná were greatly incensed at this outrage. It was with much difficulty that Father Francis de Cordova and Brother John Garces saved their lives, for the time being, by explaining that the pirates were bad men, and enemies of the missionaries as well as of the Indians, and by promising to do all in their power to have the cacique and the other captives returned in the course of a few months. By another vessel, which visited the place shortly afterwards, Francis de Cordova sent letters to his confrères and the civil authorities in Hispaniola explaining the situation of himself and Brother John Garces, and begging that all the enslaved natives should be sent back unhurt to Cumaná with the least possible delay.[3]

This document was not a cry of distress or despair, for neither de Cordova nor Garces was afraid of death. On the contrary, they rather prayed for the crown of martyrdom. It was an earnest appeal for justice to the Indian that the way of salvation might the more surely be opened unto him. It reached Haiti in good time. Father Peter de Cordova and Father Anthony de Montesinos, who had gained sufficient strength to return to the convent in San Domingo, strove in every way to induce the governor of Hispaniola to order that the cacique, his wife, and the others taken from Cumaná should be immediately given their

[3]Fernandez, Alonzo, "Historia Eclesiastica de Nuestros Tiempos" (as in note 1), pp. 23-25. This Fernandez is also the author of Volume I of Cuervo's "Historiadores."

liberty and restored to their country. These kindly pleas were of no avail with hearts hardened by cupidity. Finally the Cumanans wreaked their vengeance on Brother John and Father Francis. The former seems to have been slain on his way to the rustic chapel, while the latter was put to death, immediately after he had consumed the sacred species, in the act of saying Mass. It was only the accident of sickness that saved Father de Montesinos from the same fate at the time.

With the sources at command it is impossible to follow the zealous, large-hearted missioner closely in his tireless efforts for the salvation of souls. In 1523, however, we find him again in Puerto Rico, whither he went as the leader of several of his confrères to establish a convent of his Order. Indeed, history proclaims him one of the apostles of that island. While there he received letters from CharlesV highly commending his defense of the mistreated aborigines.[4] Apparently the position of authority hampered his spiritual activity more than was to his liking. At any rate, he seems to have held it for only a few years, and to have resigned it that he might enjoy greater freedom for the ministry.

About this time Don Luke Vasquez de Ayllon obtained a royal cedula or commission to establish a Spanish settlement on the eastern shore of the vast stretch of country which the Hispanic conquerors vaguely denominated Florida. This commission called for a kindly treatment of the Indians. Doubtless his own fame in that regard and the reputation of his Order caused Father Anthony de Montesinos and the two confrères mentioned in the beginning of this article (Anthony de Cervantes and Peter de Estrada) to be selected to accompany that Christian adventurer on his expedition. Very likely de Montesinos, who was appointed superior, was summoned from Puerto Rico for the purpose. The part of the missionaries in the enterprise, in addition to looking after the spiritual welfare of the conquerors, was to extend the blessings of Christianity to the natives. In case of success, other confrères would be sent to their aid.

De Ayllon met with considerable delay and trouble. In June or July, 1526, however, he sailed from the port of La Plata on the northern side of Hispaniola with several vessels, some six hundred persons of both sexes, many horses, and plentiful supplies for the undertaking. All the writers tell us that he stopped and reconnoitered more than once along the coast; but they do

[4]Valladares, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-102.

not agree as to the locality in which he finally determined to try his fortune. No doubt the Fathers said Mass on shore at some of the places where they landed. To the river on which he at last resolved to remain de Ayllon gave the name of Jordan. Some authors seem inclined to the opinion that it was one of the various streams which empty into Pamlico Sound, North Carolina. Others rather identify it with either the Pedee or the Santee, South Carolina. Doctor John Gilmary Shea, who, it is well known, gave years of serious study to our early Spanish settlements, is quite positive in his statement that Luke Vasquez de Ayllon entered the Chesapeake Bay and disembarked on the James River, in Virginia, where, eighty-one years later (1607), the English established Jamestown.[5] Because of the time he evidently gave to the study of the subject, since there are no signs of prejudice in his opinion, and no convincing arguments have been brought against it, we are inclined to believe that Shea is correct.[6]

The Indians, who called their country Guandape (or Gualdape), lived in small towns scattered here and there. Some of their communal houses or huts are said to have been from fifteen to twenty feet wide, and three hundred feet or more in length. Many persons could live in one of these at the same time. It was near an Indian town, and not far from the banks of the River Jordan, that Don Luke Vasquez de Ayllon set up a cross, took formal possession of the country in the name of his Catholic Majesty of Spain, Charles V, and began at once to lay the foundations of a colony. To the settlement he gave the name of Saint Michael (*San Miguél*), in honor of one of the archangels, whose feast falls on September 29. This suggests at least the date of taking possession of the land. Forthwith the *adelantado* erected a temporary church or chapel, which Father de Montesinos placed under the protection of the same archangel. Saint Michael's was certainly one of the very earliest Catholic temples of prayer in the present United States. Perhaps it was even the first. There too was said the earliest Mass on our soil of which we have any definite local knowledge.

Unfortunately the location, which was low and marshy, proved disastrous to the health of the new settlers. An epidemic soon appeared amongst them, carrying a number to untimely graves. De Ayllon himself expired of a malignant fever, in the arms

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[5]"The Catholic Church in Colonial Days," and "Ancient Florida," as in note 1.

[6]For this reason we follow Shea in this and the next two sketches.

of the missionaries, on October 18, 1526. The winter was extremely cold, and the colonists practically without food. Although the river abounded in fish, the Spaniards were too sick or weak to break the ice in order to catch them. The reader may imagine the labors and hardships to which this situation subjected Father Anthony de Montesinos, Father Anthony de Cervantes, and Brother Peter de Estrada that they might alleviate the sufferings, of both soul and body, of their comrades. Before dying, Luke Vasquez de Ayllon named his nephew, John Ramirez, governor of the intended new province. However, as Ramirez was in Puerto Rico, where he held the position of colonial treasurer, the immediate command at Saint Michael of Guandape devolved on Francis Gomez. Possibly Gomez was not the right man in the right place. At any rate, he could not control the spirit of rebellion which was not slow to arise from the general sickness, want, and suffering. A party of malcontents seized and imprisoned him. Then they proceeded to exercise their usurped authority in a high-handed manner which provoked their comrades to wrath and the Indians to hostility. The very excesses of the mutineers soon led to their own overthrow, and to the restoration of Francis Gomez to the leadership.[7]

For these reasons, it was finally determined to abandon Saint Michael of Guandape. Sometime in the spring of 1527, after a stay of perhaps six or seven months, the survivors set sail for Santo Domingo, Hispaniola; but many of them perished at sea when one of their boats foundered. Indeed, only about one hundred and fifty of the entire party reached their destination. The remains of Don Luke Vasquez de Ayllon, which Lieutenant Gomez had disinterred in order to take them back to his home in Haiti, were lost with the ship on which they were placed. Among those saved were Father de Montesinos and at least one of his two Religious confrères. They no doubt greatly regretted having to leave the natives unconverted. Yet they saw that, under the circumstances, this was necessary.

Doctor Shea's contention that the scene of this attempt at colonization was in Virginia seems very probable. Although it proved

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[7]Both Shea and Lowery, we do not know on what authority, say that the negroes on this expedition were driven to revolt at San Miguél by the treatment they received at the hands of those who wrested the governmnt from Francis Gomez. Nowhere else did we find any negroes mentioned in connection with the enterprise, although we consulted the sources given by Shea and Lowery. Considering the early date of the expedition, we doubt if there were any negroes on it.

unsuccessful and short-lived, it deserves a no inconspicuous place in the history of our country, especially in its Catholic history. As the same writer correctly states, it was undertaken in a noble, Christian spirit by a man of splendid character. Despite the animadversions of some incurably prejudiced writers, the name of Luke Vasquez de Ayllon is an honor to the Annals of Spain. Among those engaged in his enterprise, for the spiritual welfare of both the settlers and the Indians, was one of the greatest and most zealous, eloquent, and courageous ambassadors of Christ who have ever come to our shores, Anthony de Montesinos, always the Indians' friend, and the first to denounce slavery in the New World. Let us not forget this fact.

All too little has been written about this extraordinary Friar Preacher and messenger of Christ. That little gives us an ardent, though perhaps vain, desire to learn much more. It shows that he thought not of rest while there were souls to be gained for God, or good to be accomplished. His zeal carried him in every direction, led him to immense distances, caused him to hesitate in the presence of no trial, danger, or obstacle.

Evidently Father de Montesinos did not tarry long in Hispaniola after his return from Virginia, for we find him in Spain before the close of 1527. No doubt he was either called or commissioned to go to the Spanish court to give an account of the disastrous expedition. This duty performed, he at once set about enlisting missionaries for the American aborigines. Together with Father Thomas Ortiz, he soon engaged forty from his own Order. Late in the same year, or early in 1528, Father Francis Silvestri, its Master General, placed de Montesinos at the head of twenty of these Friars Preacher as their Vicar Provincial and sent them to Venezuela, where the natives suffered all kinds of inhumanity from German and Belgian subjects of Charles V who were in charge of the colony.[8] Father de Las Casas is especially severe in his condemnation of the cruelty of the white man in Venezuela. There Father Anthony de Montesinos, who was made protector of the Indians of the province, finally won the crown for which he had no doubt long prayed. The sad, yet glorious, event occurred about 1530, after some twenty years of almost unparalleled missionary toils amongst the aborigines of our western hemisphere.

In his "History of the Province of Saint Vincent, Guatemala and Chiapa," Father Anthony de Remesal tells us that on the margin of the old "Book of Professions" at Saint Stephen's, Salamanca,

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[8]Groot, *op. cit.*, I, 7-8.

by the side of Father de Montesinos' name is written: "He died a martyr in America" (*Obiit martyr in Indiis*). Father John de Araya, who certainly saw the inscription with his own eyes, makes the same statement in his "History of Saint Stephen's Convent."[9] Sir Arthur Helps and other English writers, although they do not give him the credit of being the source of their information, do no more than borrow from de Remesal, when they record this fact for their readers.[10] It was a glorious, heroic ending of a saintly, well-spent life. The New World owes Anthony de Montesinos a debt of gratitude which it should never forget. Brief as it was, his sojourn within the borders of the present United States entitles him to a high place of honor in the story of the Church here. The day may yet come when the highest ecclesiastical authority will place an official sanction on the heroism of his death and virtue.

Father Anthony de Cervantes[1]

The memory of Father Anthony de Cervantes seems to have been kept alive on the pages of history only through his connection with the ill-fated expedition of Don Luke Vasquez de Ayllon, an outline of which is given in the preceding sketch of Anthony de Montesinos. Augustine Davila y Padilla, Anthony de Remesal, and the other Dominican writers of Latin America, whom we have seen, make no mention at all of the de Ayllon enterprise or of the ecclesiastics who accompanied it. Doubtless this was because none of the three missionaries had ever labored in, or belonged to, their respective provinces. The Friar-Preacher authors who composed their works in Spain also pass it over in silence no doubt for the reason that they largely depended on the books of their confrères in America for what happened in the New World. Similarly, nearly all the secular historians of the Vir-

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[9]Araya, in Cuervo's "Historiadores" (see note 1), II, 47.

[10]De Remesal, *op. cit.*, p. 37. De Remesal also certainly saw this statement on the old "Book of Professions" at Salamanca, for he went to Spain in search of documents for his history.

A few writers, of whom no mention is made in note 1, are referred to by some historians. But they are secondary authorities of little weight; while the references are to support an opinion about the locality of de Ayllon's landfall, and have no bearing on the clerical element of the enterprise.

[1]Sources:—Lowery; Oviedo y Valdés; Shea; and Steck, as in note 1 to the sketch of Father Anthony de Montesinos. The other authors mentioned there either tell only of de Montesinos himself, or only of the de Ayllon expedition, without giving any information on the missionaries who accompanied it.

ginia project fail to tell us of its clerical element. In this way, in spite of much research, we could find practically nothing positive about the life and labors of this early missionary within the borders of our country.

Father de Cervantes was evidently a Spaniard. His name and associations prove that. But the date of his birth, or in what part of the country he first saw the light of day, we know not. Nor could we learn when, or in which of the many convents in his native land, he entered the Order of Saint Dominic, and was prepared for the priesthood. The name de Cervantes, which is prominent in Spain, indicates that he was of good birth.

In default of records, we can only draw inferences about the character of this Friar Preacher from his association with Father Anthony de Montesinos and from the caliber of the men whom the Spanish Dominicans sent over to the early American missions. From those sources we are forced to conclude that he was a clergyman of zeal, ability, courage, and good judgment, as well as of model life. De Montesinos would not have accepted his services for that perilous and important enterprise, unless he had given proof of possessing those necessary qualifications to a rare degree. The Friars Preacher in the mother-country selected only such members for the dangerous labors of the New World. Nor would de Cervantes' ecclesiastical authorities in the West Indies have permitted him to join in the undertaking, did they not feel that he was a worthy companion for the great Anthony de Montesinos. Furthermore, the historic attitude of the Dominicans of the day towards the American aborigines proves that de Cervantes was their staunch friend. Neither can there be any doubt but that his zeal in their defense and in the interest of their conversion led to his appointment as one of the missionaries who should accompany Don Luke Vasquez de Ayllon to the north.

The story of the short-lived colony in Virginia has already been briefly told. We will not repeat it here. Suffice it to say that, like his superior, de Montesinos, Father Anthony de Cervantes escaped death from the pestilence in the swamps of the James River, and from shipwreck on the way back to Hispaniola. He survived his friend and leader, Father de Montesinos, many years. From this fact we may infer that he was a much younger man. In 1561, Doctor Shea assures us, he gave the Spanish authorities at Santo Domingo "testimony in regard to the settlement on the James River."[2] This appearance at the colonial court was at

[2] "The Catholic Church in Colonial Days," p. 107, and "Ancient Florida," in Winsor, *op. cit.*, II, 240—both notes. We regret that Doctor Shea does not tell us where he found this testimony.

least three decades after Anthony de Montesinos, the zealous, saintly, and eloquent champion of the red man, had won the crown of martyrdom in Venezuela.

We have not discovered a single mention of Father de Cervantes in any book or document during the four and thirty years between 1527, when he left San Miguél of Guandape, in Virginia, and 1561, when he gave testimony concerning the de Ayllon expedition. Yet one is justified in the belief that he spent this long period in zealous and fruitful labor in the islands of the West Indies and on the mainland of Spanish America. As he must have toiled on the missions of the New World before the Virginia enterprise long enough to give convincing proof of the mettle of which he was made, he was evidently quite an old man in 1561. How long he lived after that date we can not say. Nor do we know whether death overtook him in the exercise of the ministry in the New World, or whether, like many of his confrères, he returned to Europe in advanced years in order to end his days in the quiet seclusion of some convent in the land of his birth. Despite our little positive knowledge of him, we can but regard Father Anthony de Cervantes as one of many great and holy Friars Preacher who labored so faithfully for the salvation of souls and the good of religion in the early days of Latin America.

Five years before the erection of the little fane for the colony in the Guandape country, John Ponce de Leon had attempted a settlement somewhere along the Floridian coast, possibly on the western side of the peninsula. John Gilmary Shea thinks he built a temporary house of prayer, and that secular priests went with him to attend to the spiritual wants of the Spaniards, while Dominicans accompanied the expedition for work among the Indians. This was in 1521.[3] No doubt Mass was said. In case a chapel was erected, it was certainly the earliest Catholic church on our soil. Otherwise this honor just as surely belongs to San Miguél de Guandape in Virginia, where Fathers Anthony de Cervantes and Anthony de Montesinos were the ministers. They were our first priests whose names we know, and whose spiritual activities can be located with any degree of certitude.

Owing to the untoward circumstances, they could have come in touch with the Indians but little during the short time they were on the James River. This was no doubt a sad disappointment to them. Another, though it could be laid to no fault of theirs, was

[3] "Church in Colonial Days," pp. 102-104, and "Ancient Florida" (as in the preceding note), II, 236.

the failure of the settlement, for it deprived them of the opportunity to evangelize the natives, for which they had gladly risked their lives. Notwithstanding, San Miguél de Guandape is one of the initial points, if not even the very initial point, in the history of the Catholic Church in the United States. As such its memory should be treasured—and along with it the memory of Father Anthony de Cervantes and his associates.

Brother Peter de Estrada[1]

Brother Peter de Estrada, as has been seen, was the third member of the little band of missionaries with Don Luke Vasquez de Ayllon in Virginia. Of this lay Brother as little is known as is known of Father Anthony de Cervantes. What has been said of the character of the latter, and for the same reasons, may with equal truth be said of Brother Peter. The historians' silence about him may be explained in the same way. However, it should be borne in mind that his lowlier position in the Order excludes the probability of his mind being so well trained. Ordinarily, whatever the Religious Institute to which they belong, lay Brothers are not men of education, even though history tells us of exceptions to the rule among those who have chosen this more lowly position out of genuine humility.[2]

There can scarcely be any doubt but that Brother Peter de Estrada was born in chivalrous Spain, where the family name de Estrada is not without honor. It is is also distinguished in the annals of Spanish America. He was probably a relation of Father John de Estrada, O.P., who published his "Spiritual Ladder" ("Escalera Espiritual") in Mexico City about 1536, a translation of one of Saint Climacus' best known works, and the first

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[1]For the sources from which this sketch was drawn see note 1 to Father Anthony de Cervantes.

[2]Persons join Religious Orders that they may give themselves more completely to God, and avoid the dangers to the soul which come from contact with the world. The educated generally enter as clerics and become priests. Those who are not educated (either because they have been deprived of such an advantage, or have meager talents), or come too late in life to take up the higher studies, enter as lay Brothers. Once in a while, in the olden days, an educated man selected the status of a Brother out of sheer humility. The usual life of a lay Brother is a combination of prayer and household or kindred duties. In exceptional cases he may be given other employment. In none of the Orders should he aspire to the priesthood. In that of Saint Dominic he can not be advanced to that sacred post without a special dispensation from its Master General. He is as truly a member of his Order as any of its clerics. In missionary countries especially he has often vied with the priest as a harvester of souls.

book printed on this side of the Atlantic Ocean.[3] Brother Peter almost certainly entered the Order of Saint Dominic somewhere in his native Iberian Peninsula, and was later sent to the American missions, like not a few of his confrères in that humbler status. It is possible, however, that he may have become a Friar Preacher in the New World. From the beginning, not a few of the adventurers enlisted in the ranks of such athletes of Christ. Indeed, their work in the Lord's vineyard forms many a bright page in the Church history of Latin America.

The instructions given to de Ayllon by Charles V were that the Indians should be converted and civilized, not enslaved. They were to be taught to toil. Yet no depressive drudgery, whether in mines or otherwise, was to be forced on them. They were to be treated kindly, and left to their native freedom, unless they compelled the Spaniards to take up arms against them. Many historians, not without reason, see the influence of the Friars Preacher behind these humane ordinations. No doubt, too, Father Anthony de Montesinos was among the sponsors of them, for he was one of the earliest, as well as one of the most determined and active defenders of the American aborigines. His confrères, both in Spain and in the New World, stood by him nobly. This is history. We can but attribute his appointment as the spiritual leader for the de Ayllon expedition to this fact. The selection of Father Anthony de Cervantes and Brother Peter de Estrada to be his companions and assistants proves them to have been rare men in every way. Indeed, the choice of de Estrada for the place suggests that he must have been a strong character somewhat like his namesake, the far-famed Franciscan lay Brother, Peter of Ghent, who did so much for religion among the Indians of Mexico. No doubt their hearts were aflame with the same desire for the salvation of souls.

Quite naturally one regrets that Luke Vasquez de Ayllon was so unfortunate in the choice of a location for his colony. His own death, together with that of many of the settlers, resulted from the unhealthfulness of the place. Then followed a rebellion under the leadership of Gines Doncel and Peter de Bazan, and finally the abandonment of the enterprise. Cruelty had not yet aroused the Indians to that bitter enmity towards the white man for which

[3]For this book of Father John de Estrada see Davila y Padilla, *op. cit.*, p. 670, and Bancroft, Hubert Howe, "History of Mexico" (San Francisco, 1886-1888), VI, 649. No copy of the work is now known to exist; yet few, if any, historians question Davila y Padilla's statement about it.

they were soon to become noted. With a governor like de Ayllon, and missionaries like de Montesinos, de Cervantes, and de Estrada, the natives might perhaps have been brought to the Faith in large numbers and with comparative ease.

Peter de Estrada has the distinction of being the first lay Brother of any Religious Order (at least the first known by name) associated with the Catholic annals of the United States. This fact of itself entitles him to a place of honor in our ecclesiastical history. Most likely he had been of great help to the Fathers in their apostolate in the West Indies, and was brought to Virginia with them to continue his usefulness there. Whether he succumbed to the pestilence which broke out in the settlement of San Miguél on the James River; or lost his life in the shipwreck on the way back to Hispaniola; or lived for years of further service in the New World, or in the Old, the chroniclers do not tell us.

Here we may mention that it was Don Peter Menendez de Avilés, often too severly criticized by biassed historians, who gained the first permanent foothold in Florida for Spain, and founded Saint Augustine, our oldest city. This was in 1565. Missionaries, of course, accompanied the expedition. The following year (1566), the clerical force of the new colony was increased by the introduction of some Friars Preacher. Apparently both Menendez and these sons of Saint Dominic turned their thoughts at once to the former settlement on the James River, Saint Michael of Guandape. Anyway, almost immediately after their arrival, the *adelantado* despatched two of them and a company of Spaniards to the Chesapeake Bay with the view of renewing the abandoned colony. It is not improbable that this was done, in part, at the instigation of aged Father Anthony de Cervantes, whose thoughts often fondly reverted to the Indians whom he had hoped to convert in his younger days.

The civic leaders of this new northern enterprise seem to have been men of disappointed ambitions, if not even of unruly temperaments. Such characters were all too numerous among the conquistadors. As a matter of fact, they were one of the great obstacles in the way of Spanish conquest in America. In any event, after sailing for some distance towards their goal, those placed in charge of the undertaking changed their course, and returned to Seville, Spain. Thus the renewed project of colonizing Virginia also came to naught.

Unfortunately, in spite of careful research, we failed to discover either the number or the names of the Fathers who came to

Florida at this time. One can but reject the suspicions of Lowery and others, who insinuate that they were scarcely worthy successors of Anthony de Montesinos and Louis Cancer. There is little or no reason for such an aspersion. Besides, the history of the Friars Preacher in early Latin America affords us every reason to believe in the zeal and hardihood of these men. It is a strong argument in their favor which should not be too easily set aside. The failure to reach Guandape in 1566 should be laid, not to the two priests who accompanied the expedition, but to the lay officials who were in charge of it. We shall touch on this subject again. Meanwhile, as will now be seen, other unsuccessful attempts, in which confrères of de Montesinos, de Cervantes, and de Estrada took part, had been made to plant the standard of Spain in the southeastern United States.

FATHER LOUIS DE SOTO AND COMPANION

Father De Soto[1]

The patronymic de Soto denotes some of the best and noblest blood in Spain. The name is historic on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. In the Dominican Order few are held in such high honor. The learned world can never forget the two distinguished Friar-Preacher theologians, Dominic and Peter de Soto, contemporaries and associates of the two brothers, Francis de Vitoria (commonly called Francis a Victoria), the father of international law, and James (or Diego) de Vitoria, a famed preacher and propagator of the Holy Name Society. The subject of this sketch was contemporaneous and associated with all four of these

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[1]Sources:—Barcia, Andres Gonzalez de (who wrote under the pseudonym of Gabriel de Cardenas y Cano), "Ensaio Cronologico para la Historia General de la Florida," Madrid, 1723, pp. 20, 22, 24; Biedma, Luis Hernandez, "Relación del Suceso de la Jornada que Hizo Hernando de Soto" (or "Relación de la Isla de la Florida"), in "Documentos Ineditos" and Smith, which see below; "Documentos Ineditos," III, 414-441, giving Biedma's "Relación," as above; Elvas, Fidalgo de, "Relazam Verdadeira dos Trabalhos que ho Don Fernando de Souto e certos Fidalgos Portugueses Passarom no Descobrimento da Provincia da Florida (see "Spanish Explorers," below): Gomara, Rev. Francisco Lopez, "Historia General de las Indias," Antwerp, 1554, Book I, Chapter XXXXV; Herrera y Tordesillas, Antonio de, *op. cit.*, III, pp. 134, 160; Lowery, Woodbury, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-252, 478-479; Oviedo y Valdes, Gonzalo Fernandes, *op. cit.*, I, 544-577, *passim* (see Ranjel, below); Ranjel, Roderigo, Hernando de Soto's secretary, whose account of the Florida expedition is substantially preserved in Oviedo, just above; Shea, John Gilmary, "History of the Catholic Missions among the Indian Tribes of the United States," New York, 1857, pp. 44-45, "The Catholic Church in Colonial Days," pp. 112-113, and "Ancient Florida," in Winsor, Justin, *op. cit.*, II, 244-253; Smith, Buckingham, "Colección de Varios Documentos para la Historia de la Florida y Tierras Adyacentes," London, 1857, pp. 47-64, giving Biedma's "Relación," as above, and "Narrative of the Career of Hernando de Soto," New York, 1866, *passim;* "Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States, 1528-1543," New York, 1907 (a translation of the account of de Soto's expedition by the Fidalgo de Elvas, the Gentleman of Elvas, as noted above), pp. 133 ff; Steck, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-30; Vega, El Inca Garcilaso de la, "Florida del Inca," Madrid, 1723, pp. 8-9, 150-152, 267-268 (published by Barcia along with his own "Ensaio Cronologico" noted above).

Henry Ternaux-Compans gives a French rendition of Biedma's "Relación" in his "Recueil de Pièces sur la Floride," Paris, 1841; and other writers also discuss the de Soto expedition. But, as these authors throw no new light on the subject, especially from its religious point of view, there is no reason for placing them in the list of sources.

great men. Another Peter de Soto, who helped to plant the standard of Saint Dominic in the Philippine Islands, must ever occupy a conspicuous place in the annals of that important part of the Malay Archipelago; and it is worthy of notice that the Friars Preacher of Mexico took an important part in founding the great province of their Order in the Philippines. Father Michael de Soto won the title of an apostle of Peru by his saintly life and missionary labors among the Indians there. In both hemispheres the Floridian explorer, Hernando de Soto, is known far and wide for his hardy bravery and iron determination.

Most likely Father Louis de Soto was of the same blood as all the illustrious de Sotos whom we have just mentioned. He was certainly a near relation of the far-famed Hernando de Soto.[2] Father Louis was a native of Villanueva de Barcarrota, in the old Province of Estremadura, southwestern Spain. We could not learn the date of his birth; but he was very likely almost of the same age as his noted cousin Hernando, who was born in that part of the Iberian Peninsula about the year 1500. There can be little or no doubt that the courageous missionary was educated and entered the Order of Saint Dominic in his home land. His birthplace suggests that he belonged to the Province of Andalusia, and made his novitiate and ecclesiastical studies at Saint Paul's, Seville. The fact that he is not mentioned by either of the three historians of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, whose works have lately been published by Father Justin Cuervo, would indicate that he was not a son of that celebrated institution and mother of many of the early missionaries in Latin America, that he did not belong to the Province of Spain, and that he hailed from some other of the many Hispanic monasteries of his day. Practically all of them sent subjects to labor for the conversion of the American aborigines.[3]

We could not discover the date or the place of Father de Soto's ordination, or when he first came to America. Still we are strongly inclined to think that he had received his baptism of missionary toil and danger in the New World before Hernando de Soto began preparations for the colonization of Florida. Otherwise he would hardly have been chosen as one of the Friars Preacher who should take part in that expedition; for the superiors were, as

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[2]Vega, Garcilaso de la, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

[3]See Cuervo, *op. cit.*, as in note 1 to the sketch of Anthony de Montesinos. There were then three provinces of the Order in Spain, called respectively th Province of Spain, to which Salamanca belonged; the Province of Aragon; and the Province of Andalusia.

a rule, careful to select only men of experience and tried virtue for such undertakings. Most probably he accompanied his celebrated kinsman, when the latter returned from America in order to obtain the royal sanction and complete his plans for the enterprise. This was in 1536. Father Louis seems certainly to have been with the Floridian adventurers who sailed from southern Spain, on April 6, 1538. Their port of departure was San Lucar de Barrameda, where the provinces of Huelva, Seville, and Cadiz come together at the mouth of the Guadalquivir River.

Although they halted at the Canary Islands, Hernando de Soto's ships had a rather quick journey to Santiago, Cuba, which they reached without mishap. There, further preparations were made, and additional precautions taken. The number of soldiers and would-be colonists was also increased by new enlistments until there were perhaps a thousand. On May 18, 1539, the fleet left Havana for Florida, carrying many horses and plentiful supplies, as well as hundreds of soldiers and prospective settlers. Land was sighted on Pentecost Sunday, May 25. The army of men debarked May 30 on the western shore of the peninsula, apparently somewhere in Charlotte Harbor and within the limits of the present De Soto County.[4] To the harbor was given the name of Espiritu Santo because of the Whitsuntide. Never perhaps had so strong or so well equipped a Spanish expedition been launched for purposes of colonization. Naught had been left undone in order to insure success. As a matter of fact, there seems to have been little or no thought or fear of failure.

For the spiritual care of the white colonists, who were evidently expected soon to become more numerous, and missionary labors among the Indians, twelve clergymen accompanied the enterprise. Eight of these were secular priests, the most of whom were possibly to occupy themselves with the Spaniards. One was a Trinitarian Father, and one a Franciscan. Two belonged to the Order of Saint Dominic—Father Louis de Soto (the subject of this sketch) and Father John de Gallegos, of whom we shall write in the next chapter. The four Religious were no doubt to devote their energies to an apostolate among the aborigines.

The story of Don Hernando de Soto's attempt to colonize Florida, and of the endless wanderings, vicissitudes, perils, and sufferings of his brave followers, is full of absorbing interest.

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[4]Some think their landfall was in Tampa Bay, and perhaps near where Tampa City now stands. Possibly the question will never be settled with absolute certainty.

It has been told in practically every civilized language. All who read know it. To write it here were but to repeat what has been narrated over and over again. Suffice it then to say that the States of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana very likely were all traversed (some of them back and forth) by the unfortunate Spaniards who became lost and confused in the unbroken wilderness. Few readers there are who do not admire, even if they do not praise, the intrepid courage and determination displayed by these luckless men as they made their way from place to place in a state of bewilderment. It is one of the most striking episodes in all history.

None showed themselves braver than the clerical element of the expedition. We are told that they were all superior men, learned, pious, and true to their vocation. They never hesitated to obey the call of duty.[5] Unhappily the vestments, chalices, wine, flour, and other requisites for saying Mass were lost or destroyed in the battle of Mavilla, or Mabilla.[6] This severe conflict seems to have taken place in the present State of Alabama. Some writers are disposed to locate it near the City of Mobile. Wherever it was fought, it occurred late in October, or early in November, 1540. From that time, of course, the clergy could not offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the altar during the rest of their long, hard, and tortuous travels. However, despite dangers, toils, and difficulties, they did not forget to hear the Confessions of their comrades; to preach to them along the way; to console them in their trials, sorrows, and sufferings; to exhort them to patience and forbearance; or to prepare many of them to meet their God in the hour of man's greatest need.

Through sickness, exposure, and starvation, as well as by the arrow and the tomahawk of the untutored natives, the ranks of the would-be colonizers were gradually thinned. Indeed, misfortune succeeded misfortune as they marched along. Four of the eight secular priests succumbed during the first year of their wanderings, or before the battle of Mavilla. The Trinitarian Father and two more of the secular clergy died sometime between

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[5]Vega, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

[6]The name is also written Mauilla. But in those days "v" was often written like "u"; and "b" and "v" were, and still are, used rather promiscuously in Spanish. It is a pity that we have no history of the expedition by any of the accompanying clergymen, for it would give us a much better insight into the religious side of the enterprise than can possibly be gathered from the accounts which have come down to us.

that conflict and May or June, 1542, when Don Hernando de Soto expired at the juncture of the Red and Mississippi rivers.

The courageous *adelantado,* it should be noted here, died in a most Christian manner, asking forgiveness from God for the sins which he must have felt that he had committed. No doubt the remainder of the missionaries were at his side, and he received those of the last Sacraments which they had the means of administering to him. Doubtless, too, he expired and was laid to rest to the accompaniment of their earnest prayers. Despite his faults, his men loved him. They gave him an honorable funeral. But a little later, it will be recalled, his remains, for the sake of prudence, were buried in the depths of the great Father of Waters. We can but believe that one of the truest mourners over the sad fate of the illustrious *adelantado* was his Friar-Preacher cousin, Father Louis de Soto.

Louis Moscoso de Alvarado now succeeded Hernando de Soto as commander. Under him the remnant of the erstwhile formidable expedition at once turned their thoughts towards reaching the Spanish settlements in Mexico. With him were still two of the secular priests, the Franciscan Father, the subject of this sketch (Louis de Soto), and his confrère, Father John de Gallegos, the five clergymen left from the original band of twelve. At first, the wayworn travellers tried to proceed overland to the West. However, lack of food, combined with ceaseless onslaughts from the natives, finally obliged them to return to the Mississippi River. There they built, as best they could, seven small brigantines, and sailed down that stream on a perilous voyage. Fortune now favored them, in spite of a few attacks by the Indians at the start. From the mouth of the Mississippi they followed the curve along the northern shore of the Gulf of Mexico, seeking, because of their frail vessels, to keep within sight of land. Although this indirect route, under the circumstances, was the safer way, it combined with the slow boats to prolong the journey of the distressed Spaniards.

Some sixteen months passed from the time of the death of Don Hernando de Soto on the banks of the Mississippi River before the survivors of the expedition that had left Cuba with him, May 18, 1539, arrived at Tampico, the Spanish settlement near the mouth of the Pánuco, Mexico. This was on September 10, 1543. Four years and nearly four months had elapsed since the day they sailed from Havana in a blaze of glory, confidently bent on the colonization and conversion of Florida. The change

in their condition offers a fruitful study on the uncertainty of human affairs. Quite naturally they were happy to find themselves safe again among their fellow countrymen, after almost unparalleled dangers, hardships, and sufferings. A glance at a map of the States which they traversed will give an idea of the immense distance they travelled. It is a marvel how any of them survived. Yet there were some three hundred who escaped death.

When this weary and wayworn remnant reached the Pánuco River, not one of the missionaries was with them. They had all perished here and there along the way.[7] We could not learn the names of the four secular priests who, as has been stated, gave up the ghost during the first year of tortuous marches. The two secular clergymen who succumbed between the battle of Mavilla and the death of Hernando de Soto were Father Denis (or Dionysius), a Frenchman from Paris, and Father James (Diego) de Bañuelos of Cordova. The Trinitarian, who died during the same period, was Father Francis de la Richa of Badajos. The other five met with a similar fate under the leadership of Louis Moscoso de Alvarado. These were Fathers Roderic de Gallegos of Seville and Francis de Pozo of Cordova, both seculars; Father John de Torres, a Franciscan and a native of Seville; and the two Friars Preacher, Louis de Soto and John de Gallegos. Louis de Soto, it will be remembered, was born at Villanueva de Barcarrota. John de Gallegos hailed from Seville.[8]

It is not expressly so stated, yet is seems quite certain that these last five ambassadors of Christ perished during the wandering of the Spaniards through Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana. In any case, there is no mention of a missionary with the remnant of the colonizers under Moscosco de Alvarado after they returned to the Mississippi River, built their brigantines, and set sail for Mexico.[9]

There are four original and independent accounts of the Hernando de Soto expedition, on which all other histories of it are largely based. The story can not be correctly told without a

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[7]Shea ("Catholic Church in Colonial Days," p. 113), we do not know on what authority, says three of the Religious and a French priest survived the expedition. We could find no grounds for the statement, and it is diametrically opposed to the very positive assertion of Garcilaso de la Vega (*op. cit.*, page 267).

[8]Vega, *op. cit.*, as in note 1. He is very explicit in all these assertions.

[9]Ten or twelve Spaniards were drowned in the Mississippi, during attacks from Indians, when they first started down the river in their clumsy little vessels. But it seems quite certain that there were no clergymen among them.

careful study of all four of them. The first is usually called in English "The Narrative of the Expedition of Hernando de Soto by the Gentleman of Elvas." It was written by a noble Portuguese who accompanied the *adelantado* on the occasion. The second is from the pen of Louis Hernandez de Biedma, who also took part in the historic effort at colonization. It is entitled "Relación del Suceso de la Jornada que Hizo Hernando de Soto" (or simply "Relación de la Isla de la Florida"), which may be translated "A Memoir of the Expedition of Hernando de Soto."

Roderic Ranjel, de Soto's secretary, kept a diary of the events and wanderings. Later he wrote an abridged account of the affair, which has been preserved to a large extent in Gonzalo Oviedo y Valdes' "History of the West Indies" ("Historia General y Natural de las Indias, Islas y Tierra-Firme del Mar Oceano"). Finally, Garcilaso de la Vega wrote a history of the expedition from data furnished him by a Spanish gentleman and by written reports of two common soldiers, all three of whom saw service in it. De la Vega's work is known by the name of "La Florida del Inca."[10]

These four outlines of the de Soto expedition agree to a remarkable extent, not merely in the main narrative of course and events, but also as to the names of places. Not infrequently one supplies what is omitted by the others. The first three were written with an eye to the civic history of the enterprise. For this reason, they say little or nothing about the religious element of it. In fact, we did not find the names of any of the missionaries mentioned by these writers. Garcilaso de la Vega, who was evidently of a more pious disposition, fortunately supplements them in this regard. It is he who tells us that twelve clergymen accompanied the expedition, gives us the names of eight of them, says he could not learn who the other four were, and informs us, in a general way, of the time of their deaths.[11]

Thus one is rather surprised to see Doctor John Gilmary Shea pass these men of God over in silence in his "Ancient Florida," and say in his "Catholic Church in Colonial Days" that only the name of Father John de Gallegos is given in the narratives of Hernando de Soto's wanderings. This is the more strange because in his "History of the Catholic Missions among the Indian

[10]See Sources in note 1 for these men. That the four accounts are original and independent is evident from the fact that none of the writers of them could have seen the work of the others.

[11]*Op. cit.*, as in note 1.

Tribes" he mentions the eight names we have given above. Woodbury Lowery wonders on what authority Doctor Shea could have made the assertion that only Father de Gallegos is known by name.[12] It may be that the statement crept into his "Catholic Church in Colonial Days" through some oversight, and that the omission in his "Ancient Florida" occurred in the same way. He was a very busy man. Sane historical criticism would hardly justify setting aside Garcilaso de la Vega as an unreliable source, even if he did write some years later than the other three chroniclers. His authorities were men who took part in the de Soto expedition, and his works are favorites with some of the best historians.

Of none of the ecclesiastics who went to Florida with Don Hernando de Soto is it recorded that they were killed by the arrow or the tomahawk of the red man. From this fact we conclude that they all died from hardships and exposure. Yet every one of them possessed the heart of the martyr of Christ, and doubtless won the crown of such a sacrifice. They offered their lives in the cause of God and the salvation of souls. Quite naturally, under the circumstances, they could do little or no missionary work among the natives. However, it is said that they brought a number of Indians to at least a knowledge of the Christian Faith. No doubt, too, they baptized more than one native infant, or even adult, in the hour of death, thus opening the way to heaven for them. This was all that could be done at the time.

Father John de Gallegos[1]

Like that of de Soto, the family name of de Gallegos is not without honor in the history of Spain or in the annals of Latin America. It appears ever so often in those of the Order of Saint Dominic. Some of the best Spanish blood ran in the veins of Father John de Gallegos, as may be seen from his connections. He was a cousin of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, who accompanied the disastrous Floridian expedition of Don Panphilo de Narvaez as treasurer in 1528, and was one of the four men who finally made their way back to civilization. He wrote an extremely interesting account of his experiences. Balthasar de Gallegos, Hernando de Soto's "chief castellan," or a leading officer

[12]Shea, "Missions among the Indian Tribes," pp. 44-45, "Church in Colonial Days," p. 112; Lowery, *op. cit.*, p. 479.

[1]The sources for this sketch are the same as those for the one of Louis de Soto.

in his effort to colonize Florida, was a brother of the Friar Preacher. Roderic de Gallegos, one of the secular priests who went with the enterprise as missionaries, was also certainly a near relative. Quite likely, indeed, several of the principal colonists among the *adelantado's* followers were Father John's kinsmen, for his people were influential and patriotic.[2]

Beautiful Seville, Spain, was Father John de Gallegos' native city. The date of his birth we could not discover. However, he was probably near the same age as his Friar-Preacher companion in the expedition, Father Louis de Soto, of whom the previous chapter has told. This would make him born about the year 1500. Although we have found no positive statement to that effect, there is every reason to believe that Father de Gallegos received his entire education, entered the Order of Saint Dominic, and was raised to the priesthood in his home land. The fact that he is not mentioned in either of the three histories of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, lately published by Father Justin Cuervo, would indicate that he was not a son of that famed convent, which sent Latin America many of its most efficient missionaries and staunchest defenders of its Indians.[3] In all probability, therefore, the early Floridian missionary belonged to the Priory of Saint Paul the Apostle, in his native City of Seville, which at this time was one of the great Dominican houses of Spain. In that case, of course, he belonged to the Province of Andalusia, as his birthplace would indicate.

From whatever convent the athlete of Christ came, we may be assured that he left a brilliant entourage, which made life attractive, and that only zeal for souls brought him to the wilds of the New World. His Order in Spain was then in its heyday of intellectual activity. The scholars mentioned in the preceding sketch, and many others of similar attainments, were his contemporaries and associates. No doubt he had among his own fellow-students companions who contributed not a little to the glory of their country. Possibly Louis de Soto, just sketched, was one of them. Piety and the missionary spirit kept apace with love of learning. This it was that brought large numbers of Spanish Friars Preacher over the Atlantic Ocean to labor among the American aborigines.

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[2]Elvas, *op. cit.*, in "Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States," pp. 136-137; Vega, *op. cit.*, p. 9. The missionaries with Panphilo de Narvaez were several secular priests and five Franciscans. At the head of the latter band was Father John Juarez. He was surely a commissary. Some say that he was a bishop-elect.

[3]For Father Cuervo's work see note 1 in the sketch of Anthony de Montesinos.

Garcilaso de la Vega, in his "La Florida del Inca," tells us that Father John de Gallegos was a man of much learning, a true Religious, a devout priest, and an earnest harvester of the Lord.[4] He had but imbibed of the life which prevailed among his confrères in the Iberian Peninsula. Almost certainly, we think, he had seen service in the New World prior to Don Hernando de Soto's attempt to establish Spanish rule in Florida, and had there given no uncertain proof of his worth. Most likely it was for this reason that he was selected as one of the clergymen of his Order who should take part in the enterprise of a man from whom Charles V seems to have anticipated an unqualified success.

History would lead us to expect that the superiors in Spain would appoint just that kind of a subject for the expedition. It leaves no doubt but that they would pick out only the tried and true. If our Friar Preacher was in America when de Soto conceived the project which has made his name famous, he must have returned to Spain with the *adelantado* that he might do his part in aid of the enterprise. At least, there is every indication that he was on the proud flotilla which, on April 6, 1538, set sail from the port of San Lucar for the Floridian peninsula, which was then believed to be an island. As far as we have been able to learn, no missionaries were obtained on the way to Hernando's destination.

As the preceding paper has stated, the voyage to Santiago, Cuba, was quick, for that day, and without mishap. Nearly a twelvemonth was now spent on that fertile island, of which Don Hernando de Soto had been appointed governor, in the interest of his new undertaking, in addition to the honor of *adelantado* of Florida. The delay was caused by business in connection with his governorship and by further preparations for the establishment of the intended colony north of the Gulf of Mexico. More colonizers were also enlisted in the cause.

For the sake of brevity, and in order to avoid useless repetition, the reader is referred to the sketch of Father Louis de Soto for the sad story of his cousin Hernando's tragic experiences, in so far as they concern the missionaries who were with him. All that space would permit, or that is called for, in an article like the present, has been told there. Suffice it then to say here that a glance at the maps of the many States which the unfortunate wanderers seem certainly to have traversed at once gives an idea of the sufferings, hardships, and dangers which Father John de

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 267.

Gallegos and his fellow priests underwent. The marvel is why all of them did not succumb much sooner even from mere starvation.

The reader will recall the battle of Mavilla, or Mabilla, where the missionaries lost all the necessaries for offering up the Holy Sacrifice of the altar.[5] This disaster was caused by the burning of the Indian town of that name, which the Spaniards were obliged to set on fire in order to protect themselves. Chalices, vestments, wine, wheaten flour, and every other requisite for Mass were destroyed in the flames. Before that time the priests had scrupulously performed that sacred function wherever it was feasible. Afterwards, of course, both they and their comrades were deprived of the greatest consolation of their religion.

Nor will it be forgotten that this battle very likely took place on the soil of our present Alabama; that some writers locate it near the modern City of Mobile; and that it occurred late in October, or early in November, 1540. The conflict was one of the bloodiest and most stubbornly contested within the limits of the United States in the early days. It seems almost a miracle that two of the missioners, one a secular priest and the other a regular, escaped with their lives. They were in the town when the struggle started. Unable to get away, they and a soldier took refuge in a house and barricaded the door. Every effort on the part of the infuriated natives to gain an entrance failed, until the three occupants were finally rescued by their comrades, who had won the victory.[6] We regret that history has not preserved the names of the two priests as well as the fact of their experience. Evidently, as will now be seen, Father John de Gallegos was not one of them. The losses of the Spaniards in the battle of Mavilla were eighteen or twenty men and twelve horses. About one hundred and fifty men and seventy horses were also severely wounded. Some twenty-five hundred Indians lost their lives.

In connection with this conflict, an incident is told of our Friar Preacher which at once reveals his chivalrous courage and shows an affection towards his brother as strong as that of a mother for her children. The natives offered such a strong resistance that Mavilla was taken only after repeated assaults. Balthasar de Gallegos seems to have been the soldier who shut himself up in the Indian hut with the two missionaries. At any rate, he had been caught in the town, and was without his horse. In anxiety

[5]The reader will recall that the name of this place is variously spelled.
[6]Elvas, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

for his brother's safety, when he learned of his plight, Father John de Gallegos mounted the chief castellan's steed that he might take it to him. Unarmed and thoughtless of his own danger, the brave clergyman rode at the side of his military comrades as they swayed to and fro in the conflict until the place was captured. All the while, doubtless that he might thus encourage his brother, he continued to cry out to him with the full force of his lusty lungs that he was bringing his faithful charger to him. It would be difficult to fancy a nobler manifestation of fraternal fidelity.[7]

The confidence which Hernando de Soto reposed in Balthasar de Gallegos, who seems to have previously seen service in Mexico as a captain, is shown by the many tasks of importance entrusted to him during the expedition. Few names are mentioned so often in the accounts of the enterprise as that of the chief castellan. Father John de Gallegos very likely accompanied his brother on various excursions placed in his charge. Although the Friar Preacher was no soldier and always went unarmed, the incident just related shows that he did not shrink before danger. Evidently he had learned the equestrian's art in his younger days, or before he donned the habit of Saint Dominic.

Louis Moscoso de Alvarado, possibly because of his superior ability as a leader of men, was appointed his successor by the dying Hernando de Soto. Yet Balthasar de Gallegos seems to have been the spokesman and the principal lay consoler of the *adelantado* in his last moments. However, one feels constrained to believe that some of what "The Gentleman of Elvas" attributes to the chief castellan at this time should be ascribed to his brother, Father John de Gallegos. It was the part of a priest to speak thus, rather than that of a layman, especially when there were several missionaries present. Most likely, we think, there was a little confusion of the two brothers on the part of either the writer or the printer.[8] On the one hand, Father Louis de Soto, because a near

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[7]Vega, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

[8]Elvas, *op. cit.*, p. 233. For some reason or other, "The Gentleman of Elvas" (Fidalgo de Elvas), in his account of the de Soto expedition, shows very little consideration for the religious side of it. The same is true of the accounts by Biedma and Ranjel. This alone would make Garcilaso de la Vega the better authority as regards the missionary element of the undertaking. He tells us that he knew personally a number of the men who took part in it, and that his data was supplied by a gentleman still living and the written reports of two soldiers, all three of whom had accompanied the enterprise from beginning to end. This certainly should be authority enough for any one. Some seem inclined to hesitate in accepting his narrative because the two soldiers were not men of education. But this very fact makes them the more reliable as regards such items as the names of the missionaries and the times of their deaths.

kinsman, would hardly have been chosen to prepare Don Hernando for death. On the other, the intimate friendship between the *adelantado* and his chief castellan suggests that the latter's brother, Father John de Gallegos, was the minister of Christ requested to perform this sacred function.

Be that as it may, Father John de Gallegos; his confrère, Louis de Soto; the Franciscan, John de Torres; and two of the eight secular priests, Fathers Roderic de Gallegos and Francis de Pozo survived Hernando de Soto. As the reader will remember from the preceding chapter, these five clergymen seem certainly to have expired during the wanderings of the sad remnant of de Soto's original followers, under the command of Louis Moscoso de Alvarado, somewhere in the States of Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana. Despite the opinion of Doctor Shea, we found no evidence that any of them reached the Mississippi River on the return of Louis Moscoso de Alvarado to that stream in order to sail thence to Tampico, or lived to see Mexico.[9]

While the hopes of these men of God to labor for the conversion of the Indians of Florida proved vain and futile, their efforts deserve unstinted praise. No doubt they have received a rich reward from the Heavenly Father for their pure intentions, their spirit of sacrifice, and their unspeakable sufferings. No one could have done any more under the circumstances. They had no part in, and gave no counsel in favor of, the cruelties often dealt out to the natives during the expedition. These things were done in spite of them. Doubtless their hearts were frequently rent by what they saw; but they could not prevent it. They were missionaries with the soul of an Anthony de Montesinos, a Bartholomew de Las Casas, and a Louis Cancer. The excesses and atrocities of the officers and soldiers should in no wise be attributed to them.

In appraising the cruelties of the Spaniards towards the Indians we should not forget that these occurred in an age which was more cruel than ours. The *conquistadors,* no doubt, considered themselves engaged in war; and "war at its best," said General William Tecumseh Sherman, "is hell." Possibly soldiers of today, under the same circumstances, would prove even more ferocious. Such indications are not wanting. The fact that the missionaries with de Soto strove in every way to soften the treatment dealt out to the Floridian natives suggests a motive why "The Gentleman of Elvas," Biedma, and Ranjel, who wrote accounts of the expedition, showed them scant consideration.

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[9]For Doctor Shea's erroneous statement that four of the missionaries survived the expedition see note 7 to the preceding sketch of Louis de Soto.

FATHER LOUIS CANCER AND COMPANIONS

Father Cancer[1]

The full name of this saintly, zealous, and extraordinary Friar Preacher, Louis Cancer de Barbastro, shows the noble lineage which is generally attributed to him by historians. The precise date of his birth is not known; but the circumstances of his life indicate that it could not have been much on either side of 1500. Saragossa is ordinarily given as his native city. Some authors, however, assign this honor to the little walled town of Barbastro. The two municipalities are about fifty miles apart; and both are in the Province of Aragon, northeastern Spain. In youth, Louis enjoyed rare advantages for his education, whether religious or intellectual. Thus, because he was profoundly pious and possessed of a splendid mind, as well as industrious, he made rapid progress in spirituality no less than in his studies.

Apparently Cancer entered the Order of Saint Dominic at an

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[1]Sources:—Barcia, *op. cit.,* pp. 25-26; Beteta, Gregory de, O.P., and Cancer, Louis, O.P., "Relación de la Florida" (see Smith, Buckingham, and Ternaux-Compans, Henri, below); Cuervo, *op. cit.,* II, 134-137, and III, 211-214; Davila y Padilla, *op. cit.,* pp. 217-230; "Documentos Ineditos," V, 447-478; Dutto, Rev. Louis A., "Life of Bartolomé de Las Casas," Saint Louis, 1902, pp. 352-535, *passim,* and "Father Luis [Cancer] de Barbastro," in the *Ecclesiastical Review,* July and August, 1902 (XXVII, 59 ff and 160 ff); Fabié, Antonio M., "Vida y Escritos de Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, Obispo de Chiapa," 2 vols., Madrid, 1879, I, 135 ff, *passim,* and II, 169-178; Fernandez, *op. cit.,* pp. 148-151; Fumée, Genille M., "Histoire Générale des Indes Occidentales," Paris, 1557, fol. 56-58 (a translation of Gomara below); Gomara, Rev. Francisco Lopez de, *op. cit.,* fol. 50-52; Helps, *op. cit.,* III, 215-257, *passim,* and IV, 233; Herrera y Tordesillas, *op. cit.,* IV, 143-145; Lowery, *op. cit.,* pp. 411-427, 475-479; MacNutt, *op. cit.,* 190-293, *passim;* Remesal, de, *op. cit.,* pp. 109-518, *passim;* Shea, "Catholic Missions among the Indian Tribes," pp. 46-49, "Church in Colonial Days," pp. 123-126, and "Ancient Florida," in Winsor, *op. cit.,* II, 254-255; Smith, "Colección de Varios Documentos," pp. 190-202 (giving Cancer's and de Beteta's "Relación," as noted above); Ternaux-Compans, Henri, "Recueil de Pièces sur la Floride" ("Relation de la Floride Apportée par Frai Gregoire de Beteta," an indifferent translation of Cancer's and de Beteta's "Relación," as noted above), Paris, 1841, pp. 107-143; Thacher, *op. cit.,* I, 139-143; Touron, *op. cit.,* V, 256-285, VI, 81; Vega, El Inca Garcilaso de la, "La Florida del Inca" (published by Andres Gonzales Barcia along with his own "Ensaio Cronologico"), Madrid, 1723, p. 267; Ximenes, Francisco, O.P., "Historia de la Provincia de San Vicente de Chiapa y Guatemala de la Orden de Predicadores," Volume I, Guatemala, 1929, *passim* (from a manuscript of about 1715 or 1720).

early age. The writers do not tell us where he received the Religious habit and made his course of philosophy and theology; but Father Franco (page 558) says he belonged to the Dominican Province of Aragon. We are assured that, from the start, the future martyr not only proved himself a model Friar Preacher, but also became thoroughly imbued with the spirit of his Order, which ever urges one on to labor for the salvation of souls. Just when he received priestly ordination we do not know. However, it could hardly have been long before his zeal led him to join in the stream of missionaries of his institute from Spain to the New World which eventually assumed such proportions that the superiors in the home land were obliged to place a check upon it, lest their monasteries should become too depleted of subjects.

In his "History of the Indian Missions," Doctor Shea rather strangely confuses Father Louis Cancer with Father Dominic de Betanzos, and places his arrival in America in 1514.[2] He could hardly have come until some fifteen years later. His first missionary field here was Hispaniola, or Haiti, now divided into two small republics, under the name of Haiti and Santo Domingo. As the Indians, to whose spiritual and temporal welfare he particularly wished to devote his energy, had, through destructive oppression, become few on that island, he soon began to look for a new sphere of apostolic activity. From Hispaniola he seems to have gone first to Saint John (San Juan), as Puerto Rico was then called. There he founded a convent, over which he presided for a time. Indeed, his labors there have caused him to come down in history as one of the island's apostles. In Puerto Rico, as in Hispaniola, the aborigines had largely succumbed to the hardships imposed upon them. Accordingly our Friar Preacher turned his zealous gaze towards those on the mainland. Like Bartholomew de Las Casas and many others of his confrères, he longed to plant the standard of Christianity and civilization among natives whose hostility had not been aroused by the injustices of the foreign invader, and whose inborn rights he hoped to see protected by law from the tyranny of the white man.

Our sketch of Father Anthony de Montesinos has told how the Dominicans, from the time they came to the New World, had been the Indian's faithful and fearless defenders, holding that he had no less a right to life and liberty than the Spanish *conquistador*.

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[2]Note on page 49. What Shea says there about the date of the arrival of this early missionary and how his confrères died around him can apply only to Father Francis Dominic Betanzos.

They preached continually that the aborigines should be converted and civilized only through kindness and peaceful methods. Las Casas, as the reader must know, was one of the most militant of those who carried on this benign propaganda in season and out of season. It must have been soon after his arrival in America that Father Louis Cancer came in contact with this tireless and philanthropic warrior. From the first, for they were men of the same mold as well as of the same mind, the two harvesters of souls formed an intimate friendship.

We could not learn the precise date when Cancer, already known as a man "of great holiness of life," began his apostolate on the mainland. But in 1534 he and several confrères, under the leadership of Las Casas, left Hispaniola, some of them bound for Nicaragua, and some for Peru. It is not known whether they sailed for a port in Mexico, Puerto Cabello (in Venezuela), or Trujillo (in Honduras). In any case, they were obliged to trudge afoot and overland an enormous distance before they reached the Convent of Saint Paul, Leon, Nicaragua, which Fathers de Las Casas and Peter de Angulo had erected two years before. Here the rest of the missionaries were left; but Cancer, de Las Casas, and de Angulo, hurried on to Realejo (now called Corinto), a Nicuraguan port on the Pacific Ocean, that they might sail thence to Peru. They were anxious to devote their zeal to the conversion of the Indians in that newly conquered country, and to use all their influence to prevent the enslavement of the unfortunate natives by their masters.

The three missionaries had not proceeded far on the last lap of their long journey, when a violent storm, in which they all but lost their lives, compelled the boat to return to Corinto. Before they could start anew, they received a letter from the Right Rev. Francis Marroquin, appointed the first Bishop of Guatemala (in lieu of Dominic de Betanzos, O.P., who declined the position), urging them to come to his assistance in the new diocese. Convinced that it was a call from heaven, Fathers de Las Casas, Cancer, and de Angulo at once decided to accept the invitation. They therefore hurried north, and established themselves in the Convent of Saint Dominic at Santiago de los Caballeros, Guatemala. This priory had been erected about 1530 by Father Dominic de Betanzos, the real founder of the Mexican Province; but, owing to circumstances, it was not then occupied. There our ambassadors of Christ were soon joined by Father Roderic de Ladrada, giving us four outstanding clerical figures in the early history of

Spanish America. Indeed, as will now be seen, Father Louis Cancer's labors in Guatemala are among the most interesting in his life. They show the power for good which the zealous Catholic missionary wielded over the American aborigines, when he was not interfered with by the haughty secular power.

In the history of his Province of Chiapa and Guatemala, Father Anthony de Remesal tells us that Cancer and his companions, compelled to give up their effort to get to Peru, got back to Nicaragua late in 1534, or early in 1535, and took possession of Saint Dominic's, Santiago de los Caballeros, before the close of the latter year. Be the date whatever it may, the four Fathers at once took up the study of the language of those parts in preparation for missionary labors there. Bishop Marroquin, whose long residence had made him a past-master in the tongue, acted as their teacher. Through the zeal of the prelate and their own industry and knowledge of kindred Indian dialects, they made rapid progress. Indeed, they were soon able not only to catechize the aborigines, but also to preach eloquently to them.

From the start, like their confrères in general, the Fathers did not hesitate to defend the rights of the Indian of Guatemala. They maintained that he should be left to his natural liberty, and that he should be civilized and converted, not by force or slavery, but by kindness, instruction, and good example. Although the theories of the Friars Preacher do not appear to have aroused as much hostility in the new diocese as in some other localities, they provoked no little ridicule and opposition. They were challenged to try their ideas. Nay, the civic heads promised that, if the effort succeeded, they would not only acknowledge that they had been unjust to the native, but even liberate their slaves and stop the oppressive measures of the Spaniards in the colony.

This offer was too good not to be accepted immediately. However, the missionaries, under the leadership of de Las Casas, insisted on certain conditions. They would convert the Indians and bring them to acknowledge the King of Spain as their sovereign; but no white man should be allowed to go among them for five years without the express permission of the Fathers. Nor should the conquerors wage war on them, or molest them in any way. These stipulations were perhaps the more readily agreed to by the civic authorities because the tribes selected by the four Friars Preacher inhabited the Province of Tuzulutlan, and were a brave people whom the Spaniards had never been able to defeat in battle. In fact, the martial spirit of these natives had

caused their country to be given the name of "The Land of War" (*La Tierra de la Guerra*).

An agreement, with the above conditions, was drawn up in writing and signed by Governor Alonso Maldonado, Bishop Marroquin, Father Bartholomew de Las Casas, and perhaps other officials. As given in substance by Fabié, in his "Life of Las Casas," the document reads:

> "If you, or any of the Fathers here present, namely, Father Bartholomew de Las Casas, Father Roderic de Ladrada, and Father Peter de Angulo, shall by your care and efforts bring the Indians of any province, or parts thereof, within the limits of my jurisdiction to peace, and induce them to recognize His Majesty as their Sovereign Lord and to pay him moderate tributes, according to their means and wealth, in gold, if it be found in their country, or in cotton, maize, or other produce or merchandise, I say and promise and give my word of honor in the name of the King and in virtue of the powers with which he has vested me that: I will leave them and their countries subject only to His Majesty, whom alone they shall have to serve as free vassals, and that I will not give them to any person whomsoever, or parcel them out into *repartimientos* [or allotments of land with bands of serfs] for the benefit of any Spaniard, now or at any future time.
>
> "I will also forbid, under severe penalties, any Spaniard to molest them in any way, or to go into their countries for the next five years to come. This is, in part, that no disturbance or scandal or trouble may take place while you are engaged in their conversion through your preaching and instruction. I alone will be permitted to visit them, but with your permission, and in your company. I desire to fulfill the divine will in this matter, as well as that of His Majesty the King, and to help you as far as lies in my power in the labors which you will have to undergo in bringing these people to the knowledge of God and to the liege service of His Majesty."[3]

It will be noticed that Father Louis Cancer's name does not appear in the document. Father de Remesal thinks this fact must be explained by the holy man's absence on missionary or other duties. Nor can we doubt that this surmise is correct, for the future martyr was one of Las Casas' most intimate and trusted

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[3]Volume I, 144-145. A translation of this document is also given by Father Dutto on pages 369-370 of his "Las Casas," and by MacNutt on pages 191-192 of his work. Father Ximénes gives the document in Spanish in his "Historia," pages 186-188. It was signed by Governor Alonzo de Maldonado, in the name of Charles V, on May 2, 1537.

friends, a right-hand man on whom he could depend in any emergency, as will be seen in the course of these pages.

From the start, the question uppermost in the Fathers' minds was how to begin their work. To earnest prayer they added fasting and vigils that God might guide their steps and open a way for them to Tuzulutlan, which no white man could enter except at the price of his life. The plan upon which they decided was as ingenious as providential. They knew that the hardy mountaineer loved music and accompanied his songs with various crude instruments. The missionaries had quickly mastered Quiche or Utlateca, the language used by this people. Among the Indians of the plains, who had submitted to the invader, there were a number of converts who had been left free. Many of these, doubtless instructed by the Spaniard, had become peddlers and could pass at will between the white colony and Tuzulutlan, for their trade was beneficial to both.

In these itinerant merchants the Friars Preacher felt that they had found the key to their delicate and dangerous undertaking. First, they composed a rhythmic catechism, or outline of Christian doctrine, in Quiche, and set it to music. Then they selected four of the most intelligent and reliable of the wandering peddlers, whom they engaged to aid them in their holy enterprise. Evidently before the signing of the agreement, by almost endless repetition, the quartet of converted Indians had been drilled thoroughly until they learned the sacred poetry by heart, and could readily sing the verses to the accompaniment of the native musical instruments. They had also been instructed as to how they were to carry out the plan of the Fathers. When all was ready, the traders were loaded with a plentiful assortment of trinkets from Spain, and sent off on their pious mission. Presents were added for the cacique and other leaders among the red men, for the Fathers knew well how much depended on gaining the goodwill of the authorities at the outset.

The docile traders obeyed their instructions to the letter. A retentive memory, characteristic of their race, and a quick ear enabled them to play their part perfectly. It seems to have been in early or mid-summer, 1537, that they started for a locality called Sacapulas. First, as they had been told, they went to the cacique with the gifts for him. Afterwards, they spread their wares, which, because of the great variety, drew larger crowds than had been wont to deal with them. When the bartering of the day was over, the merchants, seated in the fashion of the abo-

rigines, called for a *templanaste,* a *teponaxtli,* and likely a *huehuetl,* the crude musical instruments of the country. From their own packs they drew a timbrel and jingling bells. Then, in the mournful, recitative style still prevalent among the Indians of that part of the world, they began to sing the sacred couplets to their own accompaniment.

Never before had the untutored mountaineers heard music so beautiful, or language so poetical, or doctrine so soothing and sublime. Possibly their greatest surprise and interest came from the teaching of the verses. As writes the late Rev. Louis A. Dutto: "Not a word of the holy poesy was lost to the audience; for the simple rhythm of the melody was so constructed as to bring out in clear relief every word of the interesting story of the Creation, the Fall of Man, the Incarnation and Death of Christ, etc. . . The cacique, his court, and his subjects sat motionless and enraptured by the musical story of man's origin, redemption, and final destiny."[4] On the next day, the cacique, who appears to have been the most deeply impressed of all, sent for his visitors and had them repeat the performance more than once Indeed, it would seem that this was a daily occurrence for some time.

Finally the cacique asked for an explanation of the marvellous doctrine which he had heard. The four traders, for so they had been instructed, replied that to learn its full meaning he should send for the priests by whom they had been taught the verses and the music. They themselves had embraced the new religion; but they could not unravel all its mysteries. The priests could explain everything, and they would be glad to come to Tuzulutlan for that purpose. From this, for it was also a part of their instructions, the merchants proceeded to describe the missionaries, how they dressed in a long white robe, over which was worn a flowing black mantle; how their hair was shorn in the form of a crown; how they prayed and practised penance and mortification; how good, humble, and kind they were; how they sought not gold or silver and were indifferent to things of this earth. In a word, they were altogether different men from the proud, haughty white skins who had treated the Indians so harshly.

In view of what the Indians everywhere had suffered at the hands of their conquerors, one can but fancy that it was no easy matter, and required skillful diplomacy on the part of the travelling merchants, to induce the cacique to investigate the truth of

[4]Dutto, *op. cit.,* p. 65.

what he had been told about the missionaries. Or may we not believe that it was the work of divine grace? In any case, as a result of their efforts, the lord of the mountains, convinced by the traders that he could safely do so, determined to send an embassy with them to the Fathers at Santiago de Caballeros. Some say that it was headed by his brother, a brave and discreet young warrior one and twenty years of age. Others tell us that its leader was the cacique's own son and heir. Be this as it may, the trusted little band were commissioned carefully to observe the ways, manners, life, and character of the Christian teachers. If they were found to be as described by the red peddlers, they were to be invited to Tuzulutlan. Otherwise the messengers were to hurry back to their fastnesses.

We may imagine the joy of the good Friars Preacher when they saw the Indian merchants returning with several men of the mountain tribes. They received their visitors with the utmost kindness and hospitality. It did not take long for the young native prince to become assured of the truth of all that had been told about the Fathers. He therefore extended the cacique's invitation for them to come to his domain. Their delight now knew no bounds, for they felt that the way had at last been opened for the conversion and salvation of innumerable aborigines.

However, prudence dictated that only one of the Fathers should venture into the warlike territory at first. The fact that Louis Cancer was chosen for the perilous undertaking shows the high regard in which his confrères held his zeal, wisdom, and intrepidity. The affair proceeded more rapidly than could have been expected, for it seems to have been in the early fall of 1537 that Father Louis Cancer de Barbastro, provided with further presents for the powerful Quiche chief and trinkets for the others, set out from his convent for Tuzulutlan, or Land of War. His knowledge of the language rendered communication easy. The young Indian prince, who headed the embassy to the missionaries, sent a messenger ahead to announce the coming of the holy man. No sooner did he enter the country, therefore, than the natives flocked from every direction to see the wonderful and mysterious guest of their cacique. His march was triumphal. Arches were erected for him to pass under; the paths were swept before him; every honor was accorded his approach to the abode of the chief.

Nor was this all. A little church of boughs, bark, and twigs was built for him at once. The cacique assisted in absorbed

wonder at the first Masses offered up in it by our ambassador of Christ. What appears to have appealed to the untutored ruler with special force was the churchman's fervor, devotion, and gentle ways. The beauty and cleanliness of the priestly vestments also made a strong impression upon him, for they were in vivid contrast to the filthy and homely ornaments worn by the Indian sorcerers and soothsayers.

Conversions were not slow to follow the good impression created by Father Cancer. Among the earliest were those of the judicious, wary, prudent monarch of the mountains and the young Indian prince (be he brother or son) whom he had sent with the merchants to study the home life of the missionaries at Saint Dominic's, Santiago de Caballeros. In fact, the latter, in his admiration of the messengers of the Gospel, may be said to have become an apostle of the new religion. He preached, lauded, and defended it everywhere. The example of these leaders, of course, was an immense help to the subject of our narrative. Another aid in his work was the concordat between the Spanish authorities and the Friars Preacher, whereby the inhabitants of Tuzulutlan were guaranteed liberty and protection in the name of Charles V, king of Spain and emperor of Germany.

It was a wise precaution on the part of the missionaries to have Father Louis Cancer take this signed document with him on his perilous enterprise; for, though the Indians were unlettered, with his explanation of the compact, it proved of inestimable value in advancing the cause of religion. Furthermore, it served him as the best of personal safeguards. Possibly nothing else aided him so much in persuading the Tuzulutlans that they should be left in their native liberty and in the possession of their lands for all time. This conviction, quite naturally, had its part in winning their friendship and preparing the way for their reception of the Faith.

In his Christian baptism the cacique took the name of John, or Don Juan. Quite naturally, others followed his example and assumed such Spanish-like personal designations. So there were soon not a few Don this, Don that, and Don the other in Tuzulutlan. They were sincere in their new-found faith. With his own hands the monarch overthrew and destroyed the national idols that they might be replaced by statues or pictures of Our Lord and His ever Blessed Mother. Untiringly did the future martyr preach to and instruct the subjects of the converted cacique, whose tongue he spoke with ease and fluency. Aided by the four

merchants mentioned above, whom he took care to have with him, he sang his rhythmic catechism over and over, trusting that in this way its doctrine would take deeper root in the hearts and minds of the simple aborigines.

When he felt that he had established Christianity on a fairly solid foundation in the realm of Don Juan, Father Cancer turned his thoughts to other localities. Accordingly, he then traversed the surrounding mountainous regions, and carried his mission of spiritual mercy in all directions. Word of his eloquence, mysterious doctrine, saintliness, and kindly character, as well as of the impression which he created in the place where he first appeared, had preceded him. Everywhere, therefore, he not only received a warm hospitality, but also made converts to the Faith. These parts, however, were under different chieftains; and in some of them, especially in the little kingdom called Coban, the people did not show themselves so tractable as those of Tuzulutlan.

The reader need not, of course, be told that the holy man returned with a glad heart to make known his success to the confrères who anxiously awaited him at the convent in Santiago de Caballeros. It would be difficult to say which was the greater, their joy at receiving him alive, or that caused by the good report which he brought them. The zealous Bishop of Guatemala was also pleased beyond measure. They knew well that there were obstacles still to be overcome before these people could be comcompletely weaned from their age-long idolatry. But in the end prayer, patience, and labor would bring victory. The greatest danger and difficulty had been overcome in opening the way to The Land of War.

Fathers Bartholomew de Las Casas and Peter de Angulo, delighted at what they had learned from their fellow missionary, now paid a visit to Tuzulutlan, and extended their labors farther than Cancer had travelled. They prolonged their stay in the mountains from late November, or early December, 1537, until at least in January, 1538. Meanwhile, some evilly disposed Indians, whose hearts had not been won by the man of God, burned the church which had been erected under his supervision; but the cacique had it rebuilt at once. During the same time, apparently, that monarch's kinsman, who had been sent with the itinerant merchants to investigate what manner of men the missionaries were, married a daughter of the prince of cacique of Coban, whose inhabitants were suspected of setting the Catholic temple of prayer on fire. At first, this marriage threated to bring Don Juan and

the Cobans to war. They insisted on celebrating the event with the customary pagan sacrifices. He, though but lately converted, refused to tolerate any such abominations in his realm. His stronger will prevailed. In the end, the marriage proved an aid to the Fathers' efforts, for it united the two nations in closer bonds. Thus the harvesters of souls were cordially received and made a number of converts.

The next step which the Friars Preacher decided to take was to induce these semi-nomadic tribes to form stable towns and villages. If they could be brought to such a mode of life, the work of christianizing and civilizing them would be greatly simplified, as well as rendered the more effective. So would its hardships be much lessened. In this also, after some hesitation, Don Juan acted in concert with his spiritual directors. Yet, despite his authority, it was a task both difficult and perilous. The Indians, accustomed to their wandering ways and strongly attached to the places where they were born, showed an opposition to the plan which could be overcome only by patience and diplomacy.

For this purpose, doubtless after his return to the convent and consultation with his confrères, Father Las Casas determined on a locality which the natives called Rabinal. It was a wise choice, for the spot had been inhabited before. With some of the people it was a favorite place. Another happy thought was that of calling the town Rabinal, for the very name would appeal to the Indians, whose likes and dislikes had to be taken into consideration. Father Cancer was selected to superintend the erection of the primitive town. One of the first things he did was to build a chapel, where the new converts could hear Mass and be instructed, as they seemed never to tire of the presence and sermons of the missionaries. Rabinal quickly assumed the appearance of a town. Clothes were brought thither, and the red man taught how to wear them. Various utensils for cooking, housekeeping, cultivating the soil, and other beneficial occupations were also introduced, and the Indians instructed in their use.

Indeed, the reports of Rabinal's progress, prosperity, and happiness quickly spread abroad, bringing inquisitive visitors from among the other tribes, especially the Cobans, that they might inspect this new manner of life introduced by the Christian missionaries. The Cobans, in fact, soon invited Father Cancer to come into their territory, no doubt that he might teach them the same useful arts. The reception everywhere accorded the holy man gave him greater joy than a miser would have found in the dis-

covery of rich mines of gold and silver. Such is the way of the true children of God.

These facts place Louis Cancer's consuming zeal for souls in clear light, as well as offer a further proof of the trust and esteem in which he was held by his confrères. They also reveal no little prudence and judgment. Meantime, Bishop Marroquin had returned to Guatemala from Mexico, where he went for his episcopal consecration which had been long delayed by his missionary duties. Don Pedro de Alvarado, who had distinguished himself (not altogether gloriously) in Mexico, returned to Spain in 1536; and Don Alonso de Maldonado now held the office of *adelantado* of Guatemala.

In order to give the Bishop and the new governor a practical proof of what the Fathers' peaceful efforts had accomplished in Tuzulutlan, Las Casas induced Don Juan to accompany him and Pedro de Angulo, with a few attendants, to Santiago. Word of the visit was sent ahead. The Bishop went out to welcome the cacique with every manifestation of joy. Even the pride of de Maldonado did not prevent him from recognizing a real man when he saw one, even though he was an untutored Indian. On meeting Don Juan, he was so won by the red chieftain's manners and deportment that, having nothing else at hand, he took the plumed hat from his own head and placed it on that of the cacique.[5] Doubtless Las Casas experienced an unalloyed pleasure in this second tangible proof by which he was enabled to show that the American aborigines could be civilized and christianized by kindness, the other being the case of Cacique Henry (Enrique) and his followers in the mountains of Hispaniola. De Angulo had taken part in that instance. No one rejoiced more than Cancer.

So toiled on the four Fathers, extending their fruitful apostolate among the red people of the mountains, until May, 1539, when Bishop Marroquin summoned them in council. There it was determined that Las Casas and de Ladrada should go to Spain for the purpose of enlisting more missionaries in the service of the Diocese of Guatemala . At the same time it was arranged that Cancer and de Angulo should attend the provincial chapter of their Order to be held in the City of Mexico on the twenty-fourth

[5]De Remesal attributes this to Pedro de Alvarado; but the de Alvarado is evidently a clerical or typographical error for de Maldonado, for the eminent historian must have known that the former had gone to Spain the year before.

of the ensuing August.[6] Cancer and de Angulo started on their journey at once. Las Casas and de Ladrada went first to Tuzulutlan and Coban that they might inform their beloved Indians of the enforced absence, lest they should think they had been abandoned. The new converts were greatly grieved over the departure of their spiritual guides; but they were consoled by the assurance that they would not be left long without the consolations of religion.

Our four travellers met in the City of Mexico. Here it was decided by the Fathers of the chapter that de Angulo should return to Guatemala as superior. Five or six other Religious were sent with him. Cancer was associated with Las Casas and de Ladrada for the mission to Spain. We have found no record of Father Louis Cancer having journeyed back to the mother-country at an earlier date in the cause of the Indians. That this provincial chapter officially appointed him to accompany Las Casas, who had had much experience in such affairs, is an emphatic attestation to the high regard which the whole Mexican Province of Friars Preacher entertained for Cancer's ability, judgment, zeal, and general worth. It is possible, too, that Bishop Marroquin urged that he should be one of the party. At any rate, the Bishop defrayed the expenses of the commission.

There can be no doubt but that the three apostolic men took up the work entrusted to them in earnest immediately on their arrival. In January, 1540, *cedulas* or enactments in favor of the Indians, particularly those of Tuzulutlan and the adjoining regions, began to issue from the Spanish authorities. This fact shows both influence and expedition. From these documents we learn the names given, at baptism, to four other of the caciques in the mountains, besides the Don Juan of whom we have already told. They were another Don Juan (or John), Don Jorge (or George), Don Miguél (or Michael), and Don Gaspar. One may readily imagine that the Christians of Spain were keenly interested in the stories recounted of the conversion of these noblemen of the forests who had just been brought into the Church in so marvellous a manner.

Bishop Marroquin's envoys were also successful in enlisting both Franciscans and Dominicans for the Diocese of Guatemala.

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[6]De Remesal (*op. cit.*, p. 146) places this provincial chapter in 1538, which was the first elective chapter in the Mexican Province; but we think it must have been the intermediate chapter of 1539 to which they were called, and that Davila y Padilla has the right version. Anyway, it was in the latter's province, and his opinion fits in better with the work of the Fathers in Tuzulutlan and the departure for Europe.

These, in fact, were the missionaries whom that prelate especially desired. When all was ready for the return voyage, Las Casas received word that he should defer his departure, for his advice was needed on other affairs in regard to the aborigines. As he thought that he would be detained for only a short time, he held back the ecclesiastics who belonged to his Order that they might travel with him. Father Cancer, however, went on with the Franciscans, doubtless that he might take the official enactments in favor of the Indians, and at once begin their promulgation in New Spain (Mexico). The party sailed from Spain on Jaunary 21, 1541, and arrived at Vera Cruz after a happy voyage.

The Franciscans seem to have proceeded at once to their destination in Guatemala. But Louis Cancer went directly to Mexico City, carrying the New Laws (*Nuevas Leyes*) for the Indians and other official papers to the viceroy, Don Antonio de Mendosa, who lived there. Another object of this visit of the missionary to the colonial capital was to obtain some Mexican Indians skilled in church music, that they might help him in training the new converts of Tuzulutlan for religious ceremonies. These various affairs detained Father Cancer in Mexico for perhaps a year. However, he hurried on to Guatemala just as soon as he could, taking three confrères of his Order along with him for the missions there, and some Indian choristers whom he obtained from the guardian of the Franciscan convent near Puebla de los Angeles in the Province of Puebla, just south of that of Mexico.

Because of delays, it was not until 1542, after an absence of three years, when the beloved subject of this sketch returned to Guatemala. Father Peter de Angulo's delight knew no bounds at having back with him "Tuzulutlan's first apostle." Well might the superior exult, for Louis Cancer de Barbastro was a brave "standard bearer of the Faith," a man of the staunchest character, a priest of God filled with the spirit of religion, and a missionary ever overflowing with zeal for the salvation of souls. Indeed, the hearty, cordial welcome accorded him was universal. Here also he at once gave the civil authorities verified copies of the enactments which he, Las Casas, and de Ladrada had caused to be issued in Spain in behalf of the American aborigines—particularly those within the limits of Guatemala.

At the very first opportunity, the apostolic man hastened to visit his favorite Indians of Tuzulutlan, who had been brought into the Faith in an extraordinary way and with a marvellous success which the reader must perforce admire. His entrance into their

country was everywhere an uninterrupted triumphal march, for the news of his presence sped through the mountains. Men, women, and children, their faces beaming with gladness, and their mouths vociferating salvos that came from the heart, met him at every turn. Their joy was increased by the royal documents in their regard, the letters of the Spanish sovereign to their caciques, and the immunities which the ambassador of Christ brought with him. It was indeed an occasion of gala, both spiritual and temporal, for the red folk of the forest, who had prayed fervently that their spiritual father might return safe to them.

Cancer's own joy was not less for many reasons. Among these was the finding that the Christian towns which he had helped to start had grown greater and more prosperous during his absence; that new villages, filled with the same spirit, had sprung into existence; that peace and good order had been preserved; that the religious zeal in whose planting he had taken a conspicuous part was on the increase; and that the new converts seemed to have completely forgotten their former ways of idolatry. The religious situation could not but rejoice his paternal heart, and give him no little unalloyed satisfaction.

Our indefatigable missionary, who appears to have been placed again in charge of Tuzulutlan and the neighboring tribes, lost no time in beginning to train the Indians of this mountainous region to sing ecclesiastical music in concert with those whom he had brought from the Franciscan convent in Mexico. These latter, unfortunately, were soon obliged to return to their former home, for they could not stand the climate of the new country. However, they remained long enough to enable Father Cancer to get his project well under way before their departure. By dint of patience and perseverance on his part, the docile aborigines made good progress in this beautiful art until, feeling that Providence called him for the evangelization of a part of the present United States, he left his work in Guatemala to be continued by other confrères of his Order.

From the time of his return to Guatemala, Cancer had labored a little more than four years among his beloved flock, perfecting them in the ways of civilization as well as in Christian doctrine, when Father Thomas Casillas, Vicar Provincial of Chiapa and Guatemala, came to make an official visit of that part of his jurisdiction. This was in 1546. Possibly in part at the request of Bishop Marroquin, Casillas commissioned Father Cancer to go to Spain again in quest of more harvesters of souls for the Ameri-

can misions. The two Friars Preacher first went to Chiapa, where Las Casas, now a bishop, resided. Father Christopher Pardave was appointed to take charge in "The Land of War," which was soon to become known as "The Land of Peace."

Bishop Las Casas and Fathers Cancer, Roderic de Ladrada (of whom mention has been made more than once), and Vincent Ferrer then journeyed to Mexico City, where a council was to be held and the affairs of the Indians considered. Cancer was a man no less learned than deeply religious and zealous in behalf of the poor, downtrodden natives. He knew well the cruel injustices to which they had been, and were still, subjected. His own experience in Guatemala, as well as that of Las Casas with Don Enrique in Hispaniola, had shown him what might be done with them by kind, considerate treatment. Thus, for he knew no fear, he took an outstanding part in the discussions of the assembly by his able defense of their inalienable rights. Nor did he neglect to read and to uphold, before the meeting, the enactments in their favor which he had obtained abroad, and brought along for that purpose.

Some authors tell us that Las Casas left Chiapa with the intention of proceeding on to Europe. Yet it is quite possible that this determination grew out of the synod we have just mentioned. Be that as it may, he and de Ladrada and Cancer soon afterwards started on their second journey together in search of missionaries and to obtain further justice for the Indians. This was early in 1547. It is quite probable that Cancer had encountered Fathers Gregory de Beteta and John Garcia on the missions of Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Puebla in southern Mexico some years earlier, and talked over the conversion of Florida with them. It is certain that he met them in the colonial capital on the visit of 1546, and that on this occasion they discussed the christianizing of these northern tribes from every point of view. De Beteta and Garcia seem indeed to have longed to devote themselves to that part of the New World almost from the time of their arrival on our shores.[7] But we shall tell of this matter later on in the present chapter and in the sketches of those two apostolic men.

As soon as Cancer, Las Casas, and de Ladrada reached Spain they began their efforts in behalf of the unfortunate American

[7]See Cuervo, *op. cit.*, I, 97-101, and II, 131 ff. It is now known for certain that the "other Religious" (*un otro religious*) mentioned in those sketches of de Beteta as trying to get to Florida with him overland was Father John Garcia.

aborigines. Among the things which they obtained at that time is one of special interest in the life of Cancer, and which we can but believe originated to a great extent in his mind. That is the change of the name of "The Land of War," which the conquerors had given to Tuzulutlan and the surrounding mountains. Charles V was for the while in another part of his extensive continental domains.[8] But Philip II, then the crown prince and acting in the name of his father, granted the request of the Friars Preacher, and officially called the country "The Land of True Peace" (*La Tierra de la Vera Paz*), to commemorate the transformation which, largely through Father Cancer's apostolate, had been wrought in its inhabitants. The new name was richly deserved. To this day the province is known as Vera Paz—a perpetual memorial of the labors of Cancer and his confrères.

Here, as the subject of our sketch was not to return to his former field of toil, a brief outline of the later results of his apostolate and that of his brethren in the mountainous region will not be out of place. In 1560, Vera Paz was erected into a diocese, with the befitting appointment of Father Peter de Angulo as its head. It remained an episcopal see until 1605, having four more bishops, the first two of whom belonged to the Order of Preachers. Practically all the faithful within its limits were aborigines. That the conversion of the natives was thorough is shown by their fidelity to their religion. The beneficial effects of the work of the Fathers, from a civic point of view, may be seen by the civilization and number of Indians who continued to live there, in spite of the not infrequent violation of their pledge of non-interference and non-oppression on the part of the Spanish conquerors.[9]

In the course of time, Rabinal came to have at least eight hundred families. Coban, the episcopal seat, was still larger, for it had a population of twelve thousand. Both cities may be said to have been purely Indian. Indeed, the whole well-settled province was inhabited almost entirely by red skins. It had many churches. Happiness, peace, contentment, and prosperity reigned throughout the country. This condition continued down to the nineteenth century, or until the beginning of the frequent political upheavals and revolutions for which Latin America has become noted. Yet, even to this day, the descendants of these converts

[8]Austria, Belgium, and Holland were then under Charles V, and he was obliged to spend much of his time out of Spain.

[9]Gams, "Series Episcoporum," p. 151, and Helps, *op. cit.*, III, 274-276.

hold to the Faith which Cancer and his confrères zealously planted there.

Some writers have stated that Father Cancer, while on his way from Mexico to Spain, was taken prisoner at sea by Turkish corsairs, acting in concert with Francis I of France against Charles V, ransomed by a pious Frenchman, and then set at liberty to continue his journey. This is an error, says de Remesal, arising from a confusion of the first apostle of Tuzulutlan with another Friar Preacher whose name is not known.[10] Having corrected the peculiar mistake, we may return to the thread of our story and follow the course of the future martyr through the remainder of his life without further interruption.

On their arrival in Spain, the holy man and his two companions went immediately to Valladolid, where they hoped to see Charles V. But the emperor was in Austria, and Prince Philip, the heir apparent to the throne, was in Aragon. They therefore proceeded to Father Cancer's native province. There they again placed the affairs of the Indians before the royal court, and procured, as has been seen, the change of the name of "The Land of War" to that of "The Land of Peace" for Tuzulutlan. Las Casas and de Ladrada continued their efforts along these same lines; while Cancer appears to have now devoted his energies more especially to a search of missionaries for Mexico and Guatemala. It seems certain, however, that the very ardor of his zeal and the force of circumstances soon changed his endeavor to another field of action, in which he was to end his useful and saintly life in the way he no doubt ardently desired.

At this time, one of the questions uppermost in the thoughts of all Spain was the subjugation and conversion of Florida, the name then applied to the entire southern part of the present United States extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River, and beyond indefinitely. Its possession was judged necessary for the protection of the Spanish colonies below it. Moreover, its shores were a great danger to Spanish commerce and merchants. Interest in the project was heightened by the numerous fatal mishaps which would-be conquistadors, especially Panfilo de Narvaez and Hernando de Soto, had met with there. Cancer, as stated above, had already spoken with Fathers de Beteta and Garcia about its conversion. Possibly he had even

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[10]De Remesal, *op. cit.*, p. 513. Davila y Padilla (*op. cit.*, pp. 222-223) is perhaps responsible for the error mentioned in the text. Some writers have followed him.

dreamed of trying his own hand at the christianization of the various tribes of the country. He now consulted Las Casas and de Ladrada on the subject. Doubtless because they felt that Tuzulutlan had reached a state where it could do without his services, both these zealous men warmly espoused the cause. Accordingly, he then proffered himself for the purpose. It was a noble act of a noble soul inspired by love of God and his fellowman.[11]

The enterprise, as all could see, was one that should be entrusted to the leadership of only the most daring and intrepid soldier of Christ, to an experienced veteran who had given proof of his prudence, skill, and prowess. This was the more necessary, for, at the urgency of the Friars Preacher, only the sword of the Gospel was now to be used where the force of arms had signally failed. Such a man was Cancer. He well knew the Indian, his ways, his character, his suspicions and whims, his instability. He understood the trials, hardships, dangers, and privations he would have to endure, and realized that all engaged to work with him in that field should be men of a heroic spirit akin to his own.

Father Cancer's offer was readily accepted by the highest authorities in Spain, both civil and ecclesiastical. On December 28, 1547, a royal *cedula* or order was issued at Alcalá de Henares, New Castile, to Don Antonio de Mendoza, Viceroy of Mexico, commanding him to supply the missionary with everything that he might need from the colony for the spiritual enterprise. Armed with this instrument and other legal papers, he joyfully set about preparations for his return to America. However, there were many obstacles to be overcome. This took time. First, he went to Seville, where was located the *Casa de Contratacion de las*

[11]Davila y Padilla and de Remesal are the classic sources for what has been said so far. Practically all other authors have followed them. Davila y Padilla, whose name is often abbreviated to Davila Padilla, or even Padilla, was a naitve of Mexico City and a member of the Mexican Province. De Remesal was a native of Spain, and entered the Order there, but soon came to the Province of Saint Vincent, in Chiapa and Guatemala. His "Historia" was written about twenty years after that of Davila y Padilla. As regards the work of Cancer and his confrères in Tuzulutlan, de Remesal had the advantage of writing on the spot. Both authors have received high praise for their work. No doubt because of the impelling character of de Las Casas, both of them have brought him out in the story of Tuzulutlan's conversion rather than Cancer and the others. Practically all authors have followed their example. However, Cancer deserves much greater credit for this wonderful work than it has been the custom to give him. Our aim has been to give a better idea of the part he took in it than is ordinarily found, for it was not second even to that of de Las Casas.

Indias, a bureau whose officials played a dominant part in the affairs of the New World. Las Casas and de Ladrada evidently returned to Valladolid, then the national capital. There they were in immediate contact with the royal court itself. This disposition of their forces, on the part of the apostles of Tuzulutlan, no doubt, was made that nothing might be left undone by them in order to expedite the undertaking in Florida.[12] From the Dominican Convent of Saint Paul, Seville, Cancer wrote Las Casas, February 6, 1548:

"To the Right Rev. and Honorable Don Bartolomé de Las Casas, Bishop of Chiapa; or, in his absence, to Señor Licenciado Gutierrez Velasquez, of the Royal Council of His Majesty at Court.

"Right Rev. Sir:—

"May our good God and Lord dwell evermore in the devout and holy soul of your Lordship. Amen.

"After having written the documents which accompany this letter, the following doubts and difficulties presented themselves to my mind: These gentlemen [officials of the *Contratacion de las Indias*], finding in this river [the Guadalquivir] no caravel or ship suitable and equipped for the journey, decided to send for John Lopez, who was at Huelva with his wife and children, in order to consult with him about the matter, for he is the pilot selected to take charge of the vessel on the long voyage. No sooner did he arrive here than he told us very plainly that, for the love of God, he should not be commanded to accept the commission, for he has a wife and children, and does not care to run the risk of losing his life at the hands of the Indians.

"The next day I went to the *Casa de Contratación* and found him looking as though he were ready to die. After repeating what he had said the day before, he added that the King must not have been well informed when he ordered this expedition composed of religious; and that, as no other Spaniards are to be with us, we shall all surely be killed just

[12]The two letters which we now reproduce do not give the name of either Seville or Valladolid; yet their contents clearly show that Cancer was in the former city, whilst de Las Casas and de Ladrada were in the national capital. The *Casa de Contratación* [*de las Indias*], which he mentions more than once, was located in Seville; and because he was there also Cancer always calls its officials "these gentlemen," or "the gentlemen here." The members of the royal court at Valladolid, where de Las Casas and de Ladrada were, he styles "those gentlemen," or "the gentlemen there." This will be noticed throughout both documents. At times, in order to make the sense immediately clear, we insert explanatory words in brackets.

as soon as we land. In the presence of several persons who were listening, I answered that the Prince and the gentlemen of his council had indeed been very well informed about the truth of things and the reason for this important undertaking. Then I recounted all that had taken place in the Province of Vera Paz; and how, seven years ago, at the request of your Lordship, His Majesty had sent me there.[13] I then told them all that had been accomplished by two [or three] religious; how two bishops had since been there; how they had sent to the King a sworn statement of what they had seen; and how now we have come in person to tell him about it. I added that His Highness, understanding as he did what had been done already (namely, that four tyrants had gone to Florida and wrought immeasurable harm, but accomplished no good), had thought it advisable to assign a pacific conquest of the country to religious, and to give them assistance in their undertaking.

"They all listened attentively, and wondered at the novelty of the plan. Señores, I then said to them, do you think, if what I have told you is true and has really taken place, that His Highness has been well informed, and this ordinance of his is a wise one? All of them answered: 'Yes', and became rather ashamed of their criticisms. Your Lordship may rest assured that our Lord did us such a special blessing in the Province of Vera Paz partly in order to close mouths and stop talk and arguments about the present undertaking. Had not those successes gone before, every lettered and unlettered man would declare that the project in which the Prince is now engaged is the greatest piece of folly imaginable. Many do actually say it is, until they learn what happened in Vera Paz; but when they hear that story, they agree, one and all, that what His Highness now commands and is arranging for is a most commendable enterprise. They even think that the expenses to be incurred in such an important undertaking should hardly be taken into consideration, and should be defrayed by the King, for it is a national affair.

"The following is what John Lopez told these gentlemen [the officials of the *Casa de Contratacion*], who directed me to write to your Lordship. I also begged them to write it to the gentlemen of the royal council at court, whose business it is to look after this matter. They promised they would

[13]Evidently Cancer refers here to his return from Spain in 1541 when he left de Las Casas in the home land to further regulations in behalf of the Indians. See page 43. At the time of writing this letter it was more than twelve years since he arrived in Guatemala, and over eleven since he first made his way into Tuzulutlan.

write, but I am not quite sure that they did not forget to do it. They have forgotten many other things.

"The first thing John Lopez said was that we should have a brigantine at our disposal to take us from Florida to Havana, or wherever else we might wish to go, should it be necessary—and not a sloop. The brigantine, he thinks, should be built and made ready at Havana. I told him we should hardly need one for some time to come, as His Majesty had ordered that we should be visited once a year. Finally, after much parleying, he said: 'To tell the truth, when I was there, we had no brigantine. Whenever it was found necessary to enter a port, we simply lowered the boats from the ship and took soundings from them.' In this way, he gave me to understand that we too could do without a brigantine, although he did not say so at first.

"Yesterday I secured some information from Hernando Blas, who favors the enterprise and gives it his help freely. I spoke to him about a brigantine. He ended by saying that in his opinion a good little sloop (from twelve to fourteen cubits long), which can be taken from here on the ship, would answer our purpose. So far as my present information goes, I should advise that, since these pilots differ in this and other matters, it would be better, if not only sufficient, but even ample, powers were sent to these gentlemen [the officials of the *Contractacion* at Seville] for having a brigantine or sloop built, put together, and made ready for the sea here in this city, or at Havana, or in Mexico, as they may see fit. Of course all should be done at the expense of His Majesty. For the love of God, let your Lordship explain this clearly everywhere and to whomsoever it may concern.

"He [John Lopez ?][14] says, furthermore, that, although there are Indians in Mexico who could be used as interpreters in the interior of the country, there are none there from the coast of Florida where we must go. He also informs me that there are four Indians at Havana whom he himself had brought there by order of Hernando de Soto. He says they know the language used in Florida; and he thinks, if for no other reason, we should go to Havana. Santana says there is only one Indian woman of Florida at Havana. I told him I would not have told her for the world. The gentlemen here, however, declare she should be taken along, if no male Indian can be found, and the other religious and

[14]This man may have been Hernando Blas, mentioned in the preceding paragraph, but the drift of the letter seems to indicate that he was John Lopez.

the pilot or pilots, who go with us, think it wise to have her for an interpreter. I was likewise told that all expenses, be they for a brigantine or horses or whatever else, should be made at Havana rather than in Mexico; for the animals would be liable to die at sea, because the vessel might meet with rough waters and unfavorable winds. Authority should be given to do this, and to buy such things as may be found necessary, at the expense of His Majesty. They told me to write all this. Besides, I do it as a matter of duty.

"Another thing told me is that at Santo Domingo there is a pilot by the name of Francis de Barrio, who is there to attend to a lawsuit. I am informed that he knows the coast [of Florida] better than the pilot here [at Seville]; for the man here has been there only once, while de Barrio has made several trips between that coast and Havana. Hence, as de Barrio is more familiar with those parts, I think it would be advisable to select him to take charge, or one of the pilots in Havana or Cuba, about whom your Lordship wrote me."

In the next two paragraphs of the printed document there are a number of vacant spaces, indicating missing words or sentences which Anthony Fabié could not decipher, for his "Life of Casas," because of the decayed condition of the original manuscript. These breaks make it all but impossible to give a consecutive and readable rendition of this part of the letter. Suffice it then to say that what remains show that, for one reason or another, Father Cancer feared lest the expedition should be deferred until the following year, and urged Bishop Las Casas and Father de Ladrada to strive to prevent such a catastrophe. On this topic the missionary continues:[15]

"If the affair is going to be drawn out in this way, that is, postponed until next year, everything will have to be begun anew. I have told these gentlemen, and still tell them, that in Mexico I shall need the best time of the year for the negotiation of this business there; and that is June, July and a part of August. If I have only one month there, say June, I should need the help of the Almighty in order to have July for the sailing [for Florida]. I have sought in this way to induce the officials here to be more punctual and liberal in providing and making arrangements. If they want the expedition to be deferred until next year, they should say so. However, many poor souls there might be saved meantime, if we were on the mission. I pray God that such a

[15]Fabié, *op. cit.*, II, 172.

delay may not befall me, and that I may in no wise be responsible for it, if it does occur.

"Hernando Blas says also that a royal decree should be sent authorizing me to start at once, if these gentlemen and Captain Santana, or whoever may be assigned to take us over, can be brought to give their consent. The reasons are: (1) If I am to have time to attend to the business, which must be looked after in Mexico before the stormy season sets in, there is no time to be lost. (2) Now would be a good time to start, for nothing is heard of French privateers scouring the seas. (3) A ship is already equipped. We could sail from here [Seville], or from San Lucar. Hernando Blas assures me that it is very important that such a decree should be obtained.

"I heard, moreover, that either in Mexico or Santo Domingo there is another very good man by the name of Renteria, who, more than anyone else, is familiar with the coast, outline, and ports [of Florida]. However, he would not know how to sail from Vera Cruz. It would be advisable, some think, to have Francis de Barrio to make the trip with this man, for in an undertaking of such great importance we should not place our entire reliance on a pilot who might make a mistake and miss the route. With two pilots aboard, one would have the benefit of the other's counsels."

The two paragraphs which follow the above are so broken, in the same way as the other two to which we have called attention, that it is impossible to reproduce them. Yet the last words of the second show that the holy man hoped, with the help of God, to be in Florida by August, 1548.[16] Then he proceeds to say:

"They also told me that the notary public would charge at least four reales [fifty cents] a day to accompany me on my rounds and to certify to my purchases. They say I must pay him myself—as if I were a rich man, and the business mine, not that of His Highness. In the name of heaven, I would urge that, as one decree authorizes me to buy some things and certify to the purchases thereof myself, I may be empowered to do the same in regard to everything needed. Otherwise let His Highness himself order that they be paid for. Should another good man be appointed to accompany me in the name of these gentlemen, while I make the purchases, let him be instructed to come at convenient hours. Let it also be understood that he is to be paid for his services.

"Many other things will suggest themselves to your Lord-

[16] *Ibid.*, 174.

ship's mind, which should be asked of those gentlemen [of the royal court] for God's sake. As I am alone, and overwhelmed with cares, I can not remember all the things which these gentlemen and pilots and captains tell me are necessary for our great undertaking. If you have not already done so, kindly send me at once the Nuncio's brief and faculties. Of religious there are enough here. They are good ones too. Thanks be to our Lord for this! May God preserve your Lordship in His holy love and grace. Amen.

"Your Lordship's son and chaplain,

"FATHER LOUIS CANCER.

"[Seville,] Saint Dorothy's Day, the 6th of February [1548]."[17]

Evidently, Bishop de Las Casas and Father Roderic de Ladrada, now the Bishop's private secretary, confessor, and constant companion, hastened to lay the points of the future martyr's letter before the royal court of Spain. Certainly, too, the council determined that his requests should be granted. Herein we have a striking proof of the high regard in which the leading authorities of the land held him, and an indication of what they trusted would be the result of his noble project. His difficulties seem to have come principally from the officials of the *Casa de Contratacion de las Indias* at Seville. Possibly a little jealousy lay at the bottom of his troubles; for the officials of this bureau, feeling that they should enjoy more power in the case, may have resented the actions of the members of the royal court. There were many such counter-currents in those days. Be that as it may, Las Casas soon replied to his letter. On February 24, 1548, Cancer wrote again:

"To the Right Rev. and Honorable Don Bartolomé de Las Casas, Bishop of Chiapa; or, in his absence, to Señor Licenciado Gutierrez Velasquez, of the Royal Council of His Majesty at Court.

"Right Rev. Sir:—

"May our good God and Lord dwell in the very devout and holy soul of your Lordship evermore. Amen.

"Right Rev. Lord and Father, you and the gentlemen of the royal court have now given me great consolation by the despatches sent me, and by complying with my requests. All this certainly seems to have been done for the love of God and the salvation of souls. These gentlemen [of the *Casa de*

[17] *Ibid.*, 169-174.

Contratacion], when they read the despatches, were greatly pleased with His Highness and the gentlemen of the court for placing so much confidence and reliance in them as to grant them every power necessary for the holy enterprise, as well as for authorizing me to proceed with the requisite purchases, auditing them myself. They have promised to hurry matters and thus make amends for past delays. I do hope they understand at last that, if I am not on the road to see the provincial, it is their fault. Yesterday they assigned an upright man to go round with me, and gave him money to pay for the things which His Highness orders to be purchased. It is in these two things that they have held me back.

"It is some forty days since I handed these gentlemen the decrees of His Highness. Had they met two or three mornings or afternoons for attending to this business in a serious way, they could have settled it. That it was not settled is surely not because their attention was not called to it, for many times I went to their houses and to the *Casa de Contratacion* twice a day and importuned and begged them to hurry it along. If, notwithstanding my insistence, they have retarded me so much, I ask your Lordship how would things have gone, had I taken it easy and let them run their natural course? God knows that, in as much as what I am about concerns the salvation of souls, I should have been even more solicitous and in greater haste. The day of judgment will show this.

"Your Lordship says that, if I can not go this year, I can wait till the next. Right Rev. Sir, this permission to procrastinate does not please me at all. The devil could not wish for anything better than to see me postpone my departure to another year, for it would enable him to drag a few more hundred souls down to hell. No doubt he already rejoices at my delay. However, he will be disappointed; for, please God, I will go this year. If I do not, it will not be my fault. Were it a question of gaining a large sum of money, instead of winning souls for heaven, I can assure your Lordship they would find ways and means therefor, and would lose no time. Yes, they would find them *now,* even at the risk of their fortunes and their lives. There would be no thought of waiting for another year. If this be true, as it certainly is, I do not see why we, who are engaged in so precious and holy a cause, should not act in the same way. Do I write sense?

"I assure your Lordship that, if we could see with our eyes what we know by faith to be true, we would speak and act quite differently. I mean to say that, if we could see how anxious the devil is to block my way, or at least have my de-

parture postponed for another year, everybody here and everybody there [that is, both the officials of the *Casa de Contratacion* at Seville and the members of the royal court at Vallaolid] would have made greater haste to snatch from him those souls for whose destruction he unceasingly busies himself. Right Rev. Bishop, we should not grow careless about this loss of souls, simply because we do not see it with our eyes. Our faith tells us that it is certainly going on. Thus we should be as eager to find a remedy for the evil as we would be, if we saw it with our eyes.

"Your Lordship says that I must not go without other religious. It is quite clear that I must not attempt such a thing. If I have said that I would go alone, I meant nothing more than that I would go with only a few—but good ones. Although I do not see my way perfectly clear in this matter, I pray that Our Lord and Saviour will grant my desire of saving many souls, and that He will make good the six months which have been lost in delays.

"Your Lordship asked me to offer up the first souls saved for your benefit and that of those gentlemen [at the court]. I promised to do this. Now, on maturer reflection, I doubt if it would be quite right to offer them up exclusively for you and them. Certainly the merit of saving them is also due to those here who have helped me to expedite matters during the last few days. I do not know all who have aided. So I shall offer the souls saved to Our Lord in a general way for everyone who He knows has done considerable towards advancing the project of their salvation. Surely, if you and those gentlemen [at the court] deserve a reward, so just a paymaster will not defraud you. Therefore, let them and your Lordship co-operate with me in my preparations, that I may start this year. You will reap a full harvest from the seed you sow thereby.

"I am now taking steps towards the solution of a very difficult problem; that is, to interview the provincial and obtain the necessary religious personnel for the mission. I hope His Majesty will smooth the way, and make it not only possible but easy. I have great confidence in Our Lord, and will therefore work and do my full duty. Busy and infirm as I am at present, I will go to the provincial in order to get [leave to take] the six Religious, who are ready to start, so that I may sail on the first departing vessels. Still I fear that I shall be delayed in another way, for the provincial may not have the right to appoint our superior. This is certainly a knotty difficulty. In case he should not have that power, but is willing to designate the Religious [who

are] to go with me, and all the provisions are already on board a ship, I wish your Lordship and those gentlemen [of the court] would command me what to do, for I will not leave this port without your permission. Shall I not have to render an account of my actions, as your Lordship must know, unless I proceed with this affair in the right way?

"Presupposing the Religious ready to start and the provisions aboard a vessel, I am of the opinion that I should sail, even should the provincial have no appointive power in the case. I think so, because I take it for certain that the Provincial of Mexico, seeing how greatly at heart His Highness has this undertaking, and considering his zealous and holy desires, would himself grant us the necessary power and permission to select our superior. All the Fathers there would beg him to do this. Nay, if he refused, they would deny him absolution. He would at least say: 'I do not tell you to go; neither do I tell you not to go. So, do as you please.' That much would permit from four to six religious to go with me as companions, until our Lord, in His own good time, supplies us with a superior. However, as I am responsible to His Highness for this business, I need not consider my own wish, or what they will do in Mexico—but only what His Highness will command me to do. Therefore, I beg your Lordship to explain all this to those gentlemen [of the royal court]. Tell them also how His Highness' officials here have detained me for forty days, although I might have had everything ready in four.

"These gentlemen have thus hampered me by obliging me to attend to all the business here, although I must go to see the provincial, who is on a visitation of the province forty leagues hence, and have an interview with him. I hope, with the help of God, to see him soon and have him designate the confrères who are to go with me. Still, as stated above, I fear he may not have the power to appoint a superior. In case my fears are realized, let His Highness, those gentlemen [of his court], and your Lordship command what you wish me to do. I will obey your orders to the letter, even though I should have to leave without a regularly appointed superior. This I would do on the supposition that I should be responsible to only God and His Majesty, and that the provincial in Mexico, when we arrive there, will act in the premises as he may see fit.

"If you think proper to do so, should the provincial not have the power to appoint a superior, your Lordship might see if this matter could not be adjusted by way of delega-

tion.[18] Surely, under the circumstances, that could be done without danger of the least sin; for the greatness of the work and our urgent necessity demand it. Everybody will approve of such an arrangement, as there would be no other way of settling the question. No one will think it advisable that an affair so important and fraught with the salvation of souls should be postponed for another year, simply because the general rule is that we should not avail ourselves of extraordinary ways, but act through the ordinary channel of our own superiors. As a matter of fact, superiors do not expect us to follow the ordinary law in cases of great importance and urgent necessity. Indeed, when singular and exceptional questions arise, they themselves set aside ordinary rules and adopt extraordinary measures. So it will not be difficult for them to understand why we follow their example in the present affair."

Here we have a paragraph, like those noted in the preceding document, with a number of words, and perhaps sentences, missing through the destruction of time. For this reason, it can not be properly translated. However, it is easy to see that this part of the letter was an ardent plea of Father Cancer that measures should be taken to guarantee him an experienced pilot who had seen service in th New World, and was well acquainted with the coast of Florida, when he reached America.[19] The frequency with which he touches on this topic shows the importance he attached to having the right kind of a pilot. Wrapped up in the things of God though he was, he was no impractical visionary. These two letters show him to have had a good knowledge of the world and its ways. The only remaining or final paragraph says:

"Ships are ready to go down the river [Guadalquivir from Seville]. Others are at San Lucar. Some of the captains say they will sail by the middle of March; and others that they will not leave until Easter Sunday, which falls on April 2. In either case, very little time is left for me to attend to a great deal of business, if I have to do everything myself. But, in as much as Our Lord, whose affair it is, will look after it, no time is needed—provided, of course,

[18]Father Dutto (*Ecclesiastical Review,* August, 1902—XXVII, 170) translates this: "Your Lordship might see if this matter could not be adjusted through the Delegate;" that is, through the papal legate or nuncio. However, the words *"por via de delegado"* evidently mean "by way of delegation" in a general way. Otherwise, *"del,"* and not *"de,"* would have been used before *"delegado."*

[19]Fabié, *op. cit.* II, 178.

we place no obstacle in His way by our sins. On the contrary, we should assiduously recommend our undertaking to His care and protection.

"May our Lord protect your Lordship, and keep you in His holy grace and love.

"Your Lordship's unworthy son and chaplain,

"FATHER LOUIS CANCER.

"Done on February 24, [1548], the vigil of the Feast of Saint Mathias, at Saint Paul's [Dominican] Convent, [Seville], where I remain for a short time, and earnestly beg a reply to my letter from your Lordship."[20]

These two letters, both reproduced practically in their entirety, are the only ones we have ever seen from the pen of the illustrious Friar Preacher. They reveal him in his true character, a man of God with consuming zeal for the salvation of souls and deeply imbued with the spirit of religion, humility, obedience, and perseverance. As we read them, we perforce marvel at an extraordinary union of suave gentleness and heroic bravery. Not a harsh word escapes from his pen. Never does he shudder or waver at the thought of the danger which he knew he must face, for he was anxious even to lay down his life, should this be required, for the spiritual welfare of his beloved Indians. His fearless courage still stands almost without a parallel in the annals of the world.

Furthermore, the documents combine with history to show that there was no lack of Religious of his Order in Spain who were eager to engage in Cancer's zealous but perilous enterprise. Yet it seems quite certain that he brought none to America for

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[20] *Ibid.,* 174-178. In view of de Las Casas' part in this Florida project, we call attention to a review of Lesley Byrd Simpson's "The Encomienda in New Spain, 1492-1550" (*America,* December 28, 1929). The reviewer says: "This study has the merit of nailing once and for all the origin of that hoary tradition of Spanish barbarity to the publication, in 1552, of Las Casas' "Brief Relation of the Destruction of the Indies." Despite the reviewer's confidence, Simpson's book is only one of those many "last words" which settle nothing. His statements, besides often being specious and quite one-sided, are always dogmatic and full of self-assurance. The reviewer forgets that such things are not arguments; and that "hoary" documents, as well as "hoary traditions," must be weighed and examined from every angle, their application included. The "hoary traditions" of which he tells must be traced to hatred and bias, both religious and national, not to Las Casas. Simpson does that much. Anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish writers have simply taken avail of the Friar Preacher's ardent defense of the American Indian in order to justify or propagate their antagonism. There are other things in the review of Simpson's book which suggest a rather unkindly feeling. We regret this part of the review.

that purpose. Not until the discovery of more literature on the subject will it be possible to assign the cause of this failure with any certainty. At first, the Spanish provincial appears to have been quite willing to make the sacrifice. Could it have been that the danger of the monasteries of Spain becoming depopulated, because so many Friars Preacher sought to flock to the missions of new America, later made him reluctant to permit any of his subjects to accompany the future martyr? We do not know. History tells us that prior to this period the Dominicans of Spain had enacted a law to curb this impulse of zeal. Its sole object was to save their convents from desolation.[21] The law may have been strongly insisted on at this juncture, and the provincial did not see his way to dispense with it. Herein we may have the reason why not even the papal legate or his Catholic majesty, as seems certainly to have been the case, saw fit to act in the matter, although the latter was deeply interested in the expedition.

With Father Cancer it was different. For several years he had belonged to the Mexican Province, whose superiors had sent him to Spain in order to obtain missionaries. Failing in this, he was free to return. Just how long he remained in Europe to complete arrangements for the work on which, with all due permission, he had set his heart we could not learn. However, it would appear that he was obliged to stay there for some time after writing the second letter to Bishop Las Casas given above. At any rate, the pacific expedition to Florida had to be postponed until the next year. All that is now known for certain about the date of the tireless missionary's return to Mexico, where he knew well he would not fail to find willing co-laborers for his holy enterprise, is that it was some time in 1548—possibly during the summer months or in the early fall, if we may judge from the date he finally started for his field of action.

The former apostle of Tuzulutlan landed at Vera Cruz. Thence he hurried on to Mexico City, where he was warmly welcomed

[21]A number of historians mention this enactment, which seems to have been made by (or before) 1527. Yet it is certain that the demand for missionaries in the New World was such that the Fathers in America long continued their appeals for help, and very often obtained it. Whether it was given or not largely depended on who were the superiors in Spain. Valladolid, where Las Casas remained, belonged to the Province of Spain; and Seville, whence Cancer wrote, to that of Andalusia. Unfortunately, the future martyr does not say whether the provincial to whom he appealed in this case was the head of either of these two provinces, or of that of Aragon (the three divisions of the Order in Spain at the time). Very likely, we think, he was the Provincal of Aragon, to which Cancer himself belonged.

by his fellow Religious. Father Peter Delgado was provincial there when Cancer left for Spain. Father Dominic de Santa Maria, the first priest to labor among the Mixtecs in the mountains of Oaxaca and Guerrero, filled that office from 1547 to 1550.[22] Both were ardent apostles of the Indians. Yet Fathers Gregory de Beteta and John Garcia, who had discussed the peaceful conversion and subjugation of Florida with him at an earlier date, were perhaps those who gave the returned missionary the most cordial welcome of all. Two others who had likely already manifested a desire to enlist in the same cause were Father James de Peñalosa (or Tolosa) and a lay Brother whose family name was Fuentes.[23] There can be no doubt but that Dominic de Santa Maria and his council lost no time, on the arrival of Cancer, in espousing the noble project, for the four men just mentioned were soon selected to aid in its accomplishment.

Antonio de Mendosa admired Father Louis Cancer, whom everyone regarded as a saint, and heartily wished to see the Floridians tamed and converted. Accordingly, in compliance with the royal orders he had received, the viceroy set to work with zest to supply whatever was necessary for the expedition. A vessel called the Santa Maria de la Encina was designated to take the missionaries to their destination, and one John de Arana appointed its captain. However, much time passed before all could be made ready. The delay seems to have been drawn out by a vain search for Indian converts in Mexico who had been brought from the part of Florida in which the work of evangelization was to begin. Such a quest was ordered by Spain. Its purpose was that these expatriated natives might be freed and taken back to their own country to act as interpreters for the Fathers.

Finally, early in 1549, Cancer and his four companions sailed from San Juan de Ulúa (today one would say Vera Cruz), going first to Havana for further supplies. It will be recalled that, in his first letter to Las Casas, Cancer had shown himself strongly opposed to taking a converted Floridian squaw from Cuba to act as an interpreter for the enterprise. Now, doubtless in part because of the recomemndation given her, and in part because he could find no male Indian for the purpose, he decided to carry her along, for she might be of much service in the work of conver-

[22]"Documentos Ineditos," V, 463, 565. Page 465 gives de Santa Maria's first name as Diego; but page 468 and Bancroft (II, 726, note) show that this is a clerical or typographical error.

[23]Father de Peñalosa is ordinarily called de Tolosa from the place of his birth. Nowhere could we find Fuentes' first or Religious name.

sion. Her name was Magdalen. All things ready, the little band started on their northern journey.

Unfortunately, the inhuman treatment which the Indians of Florida had received from the *conquistadors* had made them both fear and hate the white Christians. This rendered it not only wise, but even necessary, on the part of the missionaries to seek some tribe whose hostility had not been too thoroughly aroused, with whom to begin their apostolate. No one was more conscious of this fact than Cancer himself. For this reason, he had been careful to obtain strict orders from the Viceroy of Mexico, as well as from the Spanish sovereign, that the captain in charge of the vessel should take the Fathers to only such a place. John de Arana, however, showed scant consideration either for these commands or for the safety of the priests. Although they wished to go to Bay Saint Helena on the Atlantic Coast, he deliberately sailed for the western side of the peninsula, where the Spaniards were especially obnoxious because of the expedition of Hernando de Soto. The vessel carried no arms, for the missionaries, who alone were to remain, placed all their trust in the protection of God.

For the rest of the account of the heroic enterprise we follow Cancer and de Beteta themselves. Land was sighted on May 29.[24] The Fathers then drew near the shore, cautiously making their way and watching with care for Indians to see whether they showed signs of friendship or hostility. The next day (May 30), Ascension Thursday, some of the missionaries and sailors landed in their tender or lighter. Our writers in general are of the opinion that this place was near the present Tampa Bay. There they found a few natives, who, while they did not appear altogether antagonistic, manifested some signs of enmity. Father Cancer

[24]Henry Ternaux-Compans gives this account in his "Collection of Documents on Florida" ("Recueil de Pièces sur la Floride") under the heading of "An Account of Florida Brought [to Mexico] by Father Gregory de Beteta" ("Relation de la Floride Apportée par Frai Gregoire de Beteta"). Buckingham Smith gives the narrative, in its original Spanish, in his "Collection of Various Documents for the History of Florida and the Adjacent Countries" ("Colección de Varios Documentos para la Historia de la Florida y Tierras Adyacentes"), and eititles it "An account of Florida for His Honor, the Viceroy of New Spain [Mexico], Which was Brought by Father Gregory de Beteta" ("Relación de la Florida para el Ilustrisimo Señor Visorrei de la Nueva España, la qual Trajo Fray Gregorio de Beteta"). See Smith and Ternaux-Compans in note 1. The document is not signed. Yet the very context shows that it was written by Father Cancer himself down to near the end; and that the two last long paragraphs, together with a few explanatory notes at the sides, are by Father de Beteta, who took the account to Mexico after Cancer's death.

was not pleased with the outlook. The party, therefore, continued their course slowly. From time to time, as the water was too shallow to permit of landing with the larger vessel, the smaller boat was brought into requisition for going ashore. Some always remained aboard the ship, possibly by way of precaution; and Captain de Arana seems to have selected to be among these, for it is nowhere stated that he ever left it.

At one place, where the aborigines manifested a more kindly and communicative spirit than usual. Father de Peñalosa (or Tolosa) and the lay Brother Fuentes felt that the apostolate should be started there. Father de Beteta appears to have been of the same opinion. All the missionaries went ashore this time. Magdalen, the Indian woman brought from Cuba, was taken with them. After the others had returned to the Santa Maria de la Encina late in the day, the natives would not allow de Peñalosa, Fuentes, one of the sailors, and Magdalen go aboard. Although no signs of violence could be observed from the ship, the little party of Christians spent the night in much anxiety. On the morrow, there were still some Indians at the place. Magdalen was with them, as if awaiting the Fathers; but de Peñalosa, Fuentes, and the sailor could nowhere be seen. In answer to queries about their three comrades from the missionaries and members of the crew, who rowed to within hearing distance of the shore, the reply was that they had gone with some of the red men to the village of the cacique.

Apparently, perhaps on the advice of Cancer, who does not seem to have been satisfied with the place, the Spaniards did not risk landing there again. However, they were assured by the Indians, through Magdalen, that the port of Espiritu Santo, of which they were in search, was not far distant, and that their missing companions would meet them there. No doubt Father Louis Cancer and his confrères had now entered Tampa Bay. Several times, as they moved slowly along looking for their point of destination, one or two of the priests and some of the crew went ashore in the tender that they might make observations as well as come in contact with the aborigines, to whom they unfailingly took presents in order to gain their good-will and confidence.

The missionaries, of course, were ever the leaders in these efforts to win the friendship of the red men, trusting that word of such acts of kindness would soon travel far and wide, as has been the case in Tuzulutlan. Nowhere did the Indians show any overt

signs of enmity. Because of the shallowness of the water near land, the ship itself seems to have kept well out into the bay. Only once is there mention of Mass having been said; and that was on the Feast of Corpus Christi, June 20, when Fathers Louis Cancer and John Garcia celebrated it on the shore, at a place where there were apparently no natives. Still, even under the untoward circumstances, we fancy that the Holy Sacrifice was offered up at other times.

Yet practically wherever land was touched Magdalen was there with other Indians, which would indicate that they followed the Spanish ship closely. Never could she be induced to approach the tender, giving as her reason that the natives, who she said belonged to her tribe and spoke her tongue, would not allow her to go near it. A few of the aborigines seem to have known a little Spanish. Some of them, if we may judge by the reverence which they manifested towards a crucifix which Father Louis Cancer never failed to show them, must have also known something about Catholicity. Doubtless this knowledge was acquired by contact with the *conquistadors* in their various attempts to gain possession of the peninsula. It is possible, too, that among the Indians of Florida there were a few who had been taken to Mexico as slaves, but had later escaped and made their way back to their own country.

After many tantalizing delays and tortuous windings, that made travel both slow and tedious, the Santa Maria finally reached the port which the natives had designated as the one the missionaries wished to find. This was perhaps on June 22. At any rate, the Fathers landed in the tender or lighter on Sunday, June 23, the shallow water making it necessary to anchor the larger boat twelve or fifteen miles off the shore. Father Cancer was not at all satisfied with the place, for the difficulty of approach and egress rendered it impractical for his purpose. He looked to the future, when he hoped to see ships coming and going in the interest of both Church and State. However, Magdalen was there with other Indians, whose huts, they told him, were in the vicinity. Presents were distributed among them as usual, and they assumed a friendly spirit.

To inquiries about Father James Peñalosa and Brother Fuentes, and the mariner who disappeared with them, the invariable answer, sponsored by Magdalen, was that they were with the cacique, but would come to the port later. Let us hope that the facts had been concealed from her, and that she spoke in good faith. She

said, furthermore, that the red braves of Florida, when they first heard of the arrival of the ship, thought it was laden with enemies, and prepared for bitter war. She had calmed their fear and anger by the assurance that it brought only four or five Religious priests, who were good, kind, and friendly men, whose sole object was to teach the Indians the things of heaven.

Through being consumed or spoiled, the food and water aboard the ship were nearly exhausted. The captain, John de Arana, had become more and more fractious. Nay, he even clearly indicated that he would not go much farther. Under these circumstances, although they entertained strong suspicions that their two absent confrères had been martyred, the three remaining Fathers had about determined to begin their work in this locality. When they returned to the caravel on the afternoon of Sunday, June 23, they found aboard it one John Muños, who had been taken captive ten years before, during the expedition of Hernando de Soto. He had just escaped to the Spanish vessel by means of a canoe. From him the missionaries learned their fears were all too well grounded. De Peñalosa and Fuentes were dead, for Muños had seen their fresh scalps, as well as heard the story of their execution amidst heathen orgies from those who took part in the sad event. The mariner was held as a slave.[25] Muños also informed the three Friars Preacher that he told the Indians they had killed their best friends, or men who sought only to do them good; and that, had he arrived on the scene in time, he might have prevented the crime, and even, in this way, helped to prepare the way for the apostolic work of converting Florida.

John de Arana now signified his determination to proceed no farther. It was also known that the Indians thereabouts were highly incensed at the loss of John Muños, whom they held as a slave, and had learned that the Spaniards were now aware of the murder of de Peñalosa and Fuentes. Fathers Gregory de Beteta and John Garcia felt that, under the existing conditions, it would be useless, if not even certainly fatal, to endeavor to plant the standard of Christ at Port Espiritu Santo.[26] They therefore urged Father Cancer to insist on the captain taking them to an-

[25]Fathers John de Araya and Jerome Quintana (in "Historiadores" of Cuervo, as in note 1) say that Father Cancer was martyred before Father de Peñalosa and Brother Fuentes. But this account shows them to be certainly in error.

[26]The Fathers certainly thought this place was the Port Espiritu Santo, where Hernando de Soto landed; but some writers are of the opinion his landfall was in Charlotte Bay.

other coast, as he was obliged to do by his orders, and to trust in Providence for food and water.

But the holy man, distrusting de Arana, determined to remain there, for he was convinced that now or never must he attempt the work which he had promised in the name of God to undertake. He believed himself bound by that promise. No argument or persuasion could change his mind. He was the superior of the little band of missionaries. Yet he would not use his authority to influence, or even urge, his confrères, de Beteta and Garcia, to cast their lot in with his. However, at first, he asked John Muños, the escaped slave, to remain and act as an interpreter. Failing in this, the brave soldier of Christ declared that he would stay alone.

Imminent danger caused Father Cancer no fear, for he was ever ready to sacrifice himself in behalf of souls and humanity. He had faced a like peril in "The Land of War," which he changed in fact and in name to "The Land of Peace," where God had become known and faithfully served. On the one hand, he dreaded lest, should the poor Indians of Florida not be brought into subjection and into the fold of the Faith by kindness and peaceful means, they might soon be conquered by force of arms, with great suffering, and largely reduced to slavery. To prevent such a catastrophe was worth the life of any man. On the other hand, he hoped that the presents which he had already given the Indians, those which he still had to carry to them, and the uniform goodness he had manifested towards them would combine with the information they had received from John Muños about his kindly character and mission to lead them to respect him. If he were spared even a short while, all would be well. Besides, he felt that, as he seemed to think might be the case, if the price of the conversion of these Indians was to be the blood of a martyr, it should be his own.

All Monday, June 24, the saintly missionary spent aboard the ship, arranging further presents which he wished to take to the Indians on the morrow, writing letters to his superiors, whether ecclesiastical or civil, and bringing up to that time the document or diary which we follow. Tuesday he started shoreward in the tender or lighter. But the sailors had not proceeded far, when, seeing that their lives were endangered by the rough waters, he told them to return to the caravel. On the morning of Wednesday, June 26, 1549, although the wind and waves were still high, he started landward again. As the tender neared the shore, possibly in part because he did not wish to expose his companions to

any danger from the hands of the natives, he leaped into the water, and waded the rest of the way waist-deep. When he reached the dry beach, he knelt down and raised his hand heavenwards, no doubt praying fervently for the conversion of his beloved Indians. Doubtless too, in this short while, he offered his life as a sacrifice in their behalf, should that be necesary for their salvation.

No sooner did the brave spiritual son of Saint Dominic rise to his feet than the Indians seized him and dragged him unresisting to a mound in the immediate vicinity. There they brutally killed him in plain view of the two Fathers and the sailors who watched from the little boat a short distance off the shore. We wonder where Magdalen was at the time. The fact that no mention is made of her in the brief account of Father Cancer's actual martyrdom leads us to believe she was not seen, and to hope that she had no part in it. When de Beteta and Garcia returned to the Santa Maria de la Encina, they besought Captain de Arana to carry them to another coast of Florida. However, as he refused, and Cancer's death absolutely removed all hope of accomplishing anything around Port Espiritu Santo, they were obliged to return with the vessel. At first, the course of their ship was directed towards Havana; but it was afterwards turned in the direction of Vera Cruz, which they reached on July 19, 1549, thwarted in their desire to convert Florida—yet not chilled in their ardor to labor for the salvation of souls.[27]

So died Father Louis Cancer de Barbastro, one of our earliest and greatest martyrs. His life was full of good works and charity, as well as long shone for zeal and heroic virtue. He must ever be an outstanding character among the many stalwart missionaries of his Order who labored strenuously and fruitfully for the natural rights of the American aborigines, no less than for their conversion to Christianity. Las Casas calls him a saint. So does he style him a martyr. Nor can he, we think, be denied this honor, even if hatred of the white man may have had as much or more to do with his death than hatred of the Faith. No man ever more courageously offered up his life for the truth of God

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[27]Smith and Ternaux-Compans (especially Smith), as in notes 1 and 24. Because Cancer chose to remain at Port Espiritu Santo, while his two confrères argued that it would be wiser and better to seek another place for launching their holy project, Lowery (*op. cit.*, pp. 476-477) affects to see something of a breach between them. To the writer this idea seems rather an unwarranted stretch of fancy. Nor should one overlook the state of intense excitement in which the entire document must have been written.

Our Father and Christ Our Lord, and to bring a knowledge of it to his fellowman. That is the very essence of martyrdom.

Evermore must our martyr occupy a conspicuous place in the annals, whether civil or ecclesiastical, of Latin America. He should not be forgotten (nor do we fancy he will) in the history of our own United States of America. He died, as has been seen, after Father James de Peñalosa and Brother Fuentes. We have written of him first because he was the leader, if not even the originator, of the purely spiritual expedition to our great southern peninsula. Although it ended in disaster, it is glorious beyond expression. Indeed, our country has no record of anything nobler or more heroic in its conception, in its spirit, in its purpose, or in the course it pursued. Calmly, deliberately, and of his own free choice he walked into the jaws of death for very love of his God and his neighbor.

Historians in general say that Father Cancer surrendered his pure, courageous soul to God at the head of Tampa Bay, where today stands the flourishing City of Tampa, which has a large Catholic school under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers. Their home is the center of extensive missionary activities guided by the same spirit which brought him to the place. Their church is now called the Sacred Heart. But in the "Catholic Directory" of 1902 it is noted as "St. Louis'—in honor of Father Louis Cancer, O.S.D., who suffered martyrdom on the coast upwards of three hundred years ago." At the close of his two articles on the first apostle of Tuzulutlan, Father Louis A. Dutto writes: "Thus ended the first attempt to evangelize Florida. Father Diego de Tolosa, Brother Fuentes, and Father Louis Cancer died martyrs to their zeal. Will not some one, whose voice is loud enough to be heard, interest himself in their canonization?"[28]

Doctor John G. Shea says: "Thus perished, in obedience to a sense of duty, Father Louis Cancer de Barbastro, one of the most remarkable missionaries of his order, whose wonderful sway over the Indians of Central America justified a confidence that the same means would influence the Mobilian tribes." In a similar strain the learned historian writes: "Cooler minds may treat as madness the conduct of Cancer, but in the whole history of our missions there is not a nobler episode than the attempt of this true Dominican, willing to shed no blood but his own in winning sinners from error, and seeking in an unarmed vessel, and with

[28]"Catholic Directory," 1902, p. 496; *Ecclesiastical Review,* August, 1902 (XXVII, 173).

an unarmed company, to achieve the peaceful conquest of a country already deluged in blood."[29]

No fair-minded reader, whose heart loves the good, the true, and the sublime, we venture to believe, can fail to accord with the sentiments expressed in the books from which we have just quoted. Doctor Shea, however, might well have called Cancer not only one of the most remarkable missionaries of the Order of Saint Dominic, but even of history. Such he really was. Let us hope that some student may yet discover material with which to enrich our Catholic literature with a fuller story of the zealous, kindly, whole-souled martyr. The Rev. James Higgins has done well to give him a place in his "Stories of Great Heroes, Discoverers, Explorers, and Christianizers of America."[30]

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[29]"Church in Colonial Days," p. 126; and "Missions among the Indian Tribes," p. 49.

[30]New York, 1919, pp. 100-107.

FATHER JAMES (DIEGO) DE PEÑALOSA[1]

The three diminutive Basque Provinces (known in the vernacular of the land by the name *Vascongadas*), Biscay, Guipuzcoa, and Alava, lie in the northern part of Spain. Guipuzcoa, is the smallest but the most thickly populated of the three. It touches the extreme southwestern point of France on the Bay of Biscay. Its capital, until recent years, was the quaint old town of Tolosa, about fifteen miles, south by west, from Saint, or San, Sebastian, which is now the chief city. Tolosa was the native place of the subject of this sketch, Father James de Peñalosa. But from that fact, after a medieval custom, he is more frequently called Diego de Tolosa.

Spain has no better people than the Basques, who are thought to be of really a different blood from the rest of the country. They are a hardy, brave, and industrious race. What is more, they are simple and honest, intelligent and deeply religious. Many of them are found in Navarre, and in the three contiguous departments of France which once belonged to Spain. They have given not a few noted men to the world. Among those of the stock who have honored the Church, for instance, we may mention Saint Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, and his disciple, Saint Francis Xavier, the patron of missionaries. Ignatius first saw the light of day in Guipuzcoa itself, the native district of Father James de Peñalosa. Francis was born in Navarre, but was of Basque origin. Father John of Navarre, as he is usually called, one of Saint Dominic's most beloved immediate disciples, was a native of the Province of Biscay.[2]

Unfortunately, no chronicler or historian we have seen gives the date of Father de Peñalosa's birth. Yet we are inclined to think that he was the youngest of the four priests in the Floridian ex-

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[1]SOURCES:—Barcia; Betata, de; Cancer; Cuervo; Davila y Padilla; Lowery; Remesal, de; Shea; Smith; Ternaux-Compans; Vega—all as in note 1 to the sketch of Cancer. The historians published by Cuervo tell only of Father Gregory de Beteta directly, because he was a son of Saint Stephen's Priory, Salamanca, and of the other four members of the expedition in so far as they were connected with him. It is somewhat strange, yet Garcilaso de la Vega (*op. cit.*, p. 267) says that he could not learn the names of the four Friars Preacher who went to Florida with Father Louis Cancer.

[2]See O'Daniel, Victor Francis, O.P., "The First Disciples of Saint Dominic," Washington, D. C., 1928, pp. 300 ff.

pedition. Nor have we anywhere found when, or in which of the numerous convents of Spain, he became a Friar Preacher and was raised to the priesthood. Very likely it was in his native Tolosa. As he is one of the martyrs of the United States, let us hope that some future student will discover at least the most interesting facts of the holy man's life on both sides of the Atlantic, and make them known to the English-speaking world. Father Franco (page 558) says he belonged to the Province of Spain. However, his birthplace and the fact that none of Father Cuervo's historians of Saint Stephen's claim him as a member of their province incline us to believe that he was a son of that of Aragon.

For the same reason, we do not know when James de Peñalosa came to Spanish America, or in what part of it he first labored. Yet it is certain that he had been in Mexico, or New Spain, for some years, had given proof of his zeal for the salvation of souls as well as of keen interest in the welfare of the Indians, and had won the confidence and esteem of the Fathers of that province by his prudence, staunch character, and deeply religious life, when they began to discuss the conversion and civilization of Florida in the same way that the Province of Vera Paz, Guatemala, had been brought under the yoke of Christ. Only under this supposition can we understand either the proffer or the acceptance of his services for an enterprise which was so full of peril, hardship, and privation. History combines with the letters given in the previous sketch to assure us that only such a missionary would have been taken to Florida.

There can be no doubt but that our Basque Friar Preacher was among those who gave Father Louis Cancer de Barbastro a warm welcome in Mexico City on the latter's return there from Spain in 1548. Doubtless, too, de Peñalosa had already discussed the Florida project with Fathers Gregory de Beteta and John Garcia, and expressed an ardent desire to become a party to the noble project. Such a holy ambition, if we may so designate it, seems to have been quite widespread among the Friars Preacher in the New World. Everywhere they were *par excellence* the friends of the aborigines, whose cause they never hesitated to espouse, and in whose defense they never hesitated. They uniformly maintained that the red man should be left to his native freedom, not enslaved. In season and out of season they preached the doctrine that he could be, and should be, tamed, civilized, and converted by kindly treatment and training, rather than at the point of the bayonet.

In their zeal for the greater number of the Indians, rather than out of any love of adventure, or mere pride to demonstrate the truth of what they preached, these athletes of Christ were ever ready, nay eager, to go among and live alone with the wild savage, no matter what the dangers, the hardships, or the privations they might have to encounter. The loss of their own lives in this apostolate they accounted a sacrifice on the altar of divine love. For martyrdom they knew they would receive the crown of eternal glory as their own reward; whilst they hoped that their blood would prove the seed from which the true faith would spring up among the nomadic tribes of the American wilderness. Numbers of them did become martyrs in the sacred cause. Nor can it be too often repeated that it is in no small measure due to their efforts that so many of the aborigines of Spanish America still survive, no less than that they are Catholic.

Such a spirit evidently dwelt in the heart of Father James de Peñalosa. Father Alphonsus (Alonso) Franco, at the end of his "History of the Province of Saint James, in Mexico," places his name in the list of its members who are known to have lived very zealous, saintly lives.[3] At the time mentioned in the previous sketch (about 1541 or 1542), the eyes of his confrères in Mexico were turned in a special manner towards the red man in Florida. They feared that he would soon meet the fate that had befallen many other tribes farther south, unless he were subdued and christianized like the Tuzulutlans and Cobans. Our Basque Friar-Preacher, there is every reason to believe, was one of those who strongly counselled such an undertaking. Fathers Gregory de Beteta and John Garcia, as will be seen in the sketches of them, had tried to reach Florida overland a few years prior to their expedition under Father Cancer.[4] Only the impossibility of such a feat made them return to Mexico City. James de Peñalosa must have taken a keen interest in this effort, and been greatly disappointed at its failure. Possibly, indeed, he longed to accompany his two confrères, but was prevented by other duties.

Be that as it may, the zealous son of quaint old Tolosa lost

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[3]Franco, Alonso, O.P., "Segunda parte de la Historia de la Provincia de Santiago de Mexico, Orden de Predicadores en la Nueva España," Mexico City, 1900, p. 558. This book was printed from a manuscript dated 1645; and its author (Franco) called it *"Segunda Parte"* because he intended it to be a continuation of Davila y Padilla's history, published fifty-one years earlier. The preface of the editor shows that the author's full name was Franco y Ortega.

[4]See note 7 to the sketch of Cancer.

no time in becoming associated with a similar undertaking under the leadership of the first apostle of "The Land of Peace." The story of all this, together with that of the martyrdom of the Basque Friar Preacher, has been told in the sketch of Father Louis Cancer de Barrastro. Suffice it then to say here that, until he was spirited away by the natives of Florida, Father de Peñalosa is always mentioned as one of the first of the little band of missionaries to go ashore.[5] From the start, he seems to have felt no fear, and to have wished to remain with the first Indians they met. This of itself places his zeal and courage in the clearest light. It is a proof of a real man of God that can not be questioned, and one which largely makes up for the neglect of the annalists to give us even a brief outline of his life. He recoiled before no peril.

The reader, of course, will recall that he received his crown of martyrdom before Father Louis Cancer, who seems to have borne him some special affection. It will be remembered that the five missionaries went on land the first time Ascension Thursday, May 30, 1549, apparently a little south of the entrance to Tampa Bay. On June 26th, Father Cancer was killed about where now stands Tampa City. Judging from the account of this part of the expedition by Cancer and Gregory de Beteta, we are inclined to place de Peñalosa's death practically midway between these two dates, and somewhere along the southern shore of the bay.[6]

What Father Louis A. Dutto and Doctor John Gilmary Shea say of the ending of Father Louis Cancer's life applies with equal force to the ending of Father James de Peñalosa's.[7] The glorious close of the Basque Friar Preacher's labors will ever entitle him to a conspicuous place in the Catholic history of the New World. We of the United States have every reason for a special religious pride in him; and we should take good care that he is not forgotten in the annals of our Church. Such heroism can not be too highly treasured.

BROTHER ——— FUENTES[1]

In the Religious Orders, as in the world itself, virtue, piety, and heroism are found in the lowly as well as in those whose sta-

[5]Cancer and de Beteta's account, as mentioned in notes 1 and 24 to the sketch of Cancer.

[6]See the preceding sketch, towards the end.

[7]See notes 28 and 29 to the preceding sketch of Cancer.

[1]For the sources of this paper see note 1 to that on Father James de Peñalosa.

tion places them higher in the social scale of life. Indeed, greater humility is required to embrace the state of a lay Brother than to become a priest, for the simple reason that it confers not the least honor. History shows that the various Religious Institutes have as many holy Brothers, in proportion to their numbers, as saintly clerics. While the former may not enjoy the esteem of men to the same extent as the latter, they participate none the less in the love of God and His blessings. The subject of the present chapter belonged to the part of the Order of Saint Dominic known as lay Brothers.[2]

One can but regret that the early writers did not take the care to preserve either the baptismal or the Religious name of this faithful servant of Christ. Because of this oversight or neglect (whichever one may choose to call it) we can only tell of him under his family name, and call him Brother ——— Fuentes. Doubtless he was a native of Spain; but we do not know when or in what part of that truly Catholic land he was born. Neither could we discover when he came to America, or whether he entered the Order of Saint Dominic in the Old World or in the New. However, the indications seem to be that he was one of the Friars Preacher of the Spanish convents to whom the call for missionaries among the American aborigines appealed so strongly that they came over in frequent groups. Father Franco (page 561), it is true, puts him down as belonging to the Mexican Province; but this the historian may have done because he did not know his original affiliation.

The number of persons of distinction on both sides of the Atlantic who have borne, and still bear, the same patronymic suggests that Brother Fuentes belonged to a good family. Possibly he became a Friar Preacher somewhat late in life, when rather too advanced in years to study for the sacred Orders, or chose the lowlier state of a lay Brother out of sheer humility. As such, of course, his work would ordinarily be menial service in and around the convent. Nowhere could he devote himself to the priestly ministry, because he was not ordained. Yet on the missions in the wilds of America he could teach the Indians Christian doctrine, instruct them in their duties, and help the Fathers in various other ways with their pastoral cares. There were not a few Brothers among the bands of Dominican harvesters of souls sent over from old Spain who seem to have come for that

[2]See note 2 to the paper on Brother Peter de Estrada about the position, labor, etc., of lay Brothers in religious orders.

very purpose. At times they accomplished practically as much good as priests. The same is true of all the orders.

No writer whom we have seen tells us whether Brother Fuentes labored in Hispaniola, or in any of the other Spanish colonies, before he reached Mexico, which was then called New Spain. Evidently he had spent some years in this latter part of Spain's transatlantic possessions, done noble work there, and given signal proof of his zeal, of his staunch character, and of being a man possessed of rare prudence before he was allowed to join the Father Louis Cancer expedition. Only this could explain his association with the little band of priests who determined to attempt the taming and the conversion of the Indians of Florida with the sole swords of kindness, the Gospel, and enlightenment. It was an undertaking for which, because of the dangers, hardships, and privations involved in it, only the bravest of the brave and the best of the good would be selected. Another aspect of the misison which would have appalled any but the most stalwart soldier of Christ was the loneliness of life there for a white man so far removed from his compatriots.

At the end of his "History of the Province of Saint James, in Mexico," Father Franco y Ortega places Brother Fuentes in the list of those of its members who are known to have lived saintly lives and practised really heroic virtue.[3] From this simple declaration alone we may judge of the character of the man, and understand why he was taken in by the apostle of Tuzulutlan for his perilous enterprise. The very fact that he was a lay Brother renders the choice of him for it all the more extraordinary, as well as speaks volumes in his praise. Anyway, as every one should know, it is not always the most deserving about whom the most is written. As Thomas Gray declares in his appropriately entitled "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard":

> "Full many a gem of purest ray serene
> The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear.
> Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

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[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 561. See note 3 to the preceding paper for this work. Besides lay Brothers in the strict sense of the word, practically all the older Religious Orders had, at times at least, in their houses pious persons devoted to the cause of religion, and living more or less separated from the world. They were called "oblates," or "familiars." They often did the work of a lay Brother. The greater number of writers think Fuentes was a pious familiar. However, the facts that he was associated with the perilous Florida project; and that the Spanish word *donado* (which is apparently the cause of that opinion) signifies a lay Brother of a religious community, as well as an oblate, incline us to believe that he was a lay Brother in the true sense. Certainly he at least belonged to Third Order of Saint Dominic.

No doubt Fuentes was one of his many confrères who received Cancer with open arms, in 1548, when he returned from Spain to Mexico with full approval and authority to repeat the Tuzulutlan experiment in Florida.

Our readers, we take it for granted, know the story of the preparations of the missionaries, their journey from Mexico to Cuba, and thence to the western coast of Florida, from the sketch of Father Cancer. So we will not retell it here. Suffice it to say that the account of the expedition by Fathers Cancer himself and Gregory de Beteta shows Brother Fuentes was one of the first to go ashore; and that, like Father James de Peñalosa, he wished to remain with the first Indians whom they met. He shrank from no danger. All this reveals both zeal and courage.

Fuentes and de Peñalosa, it will be remembered, were spirited away by the natives at the same time; from which we may conclude that they were murdered in the same place and almost simultaneously, for the Indians generally did not delay about the execution of their victims. They both won the crown immortal before Cancer himself. In the previous chapter we placed the sad event about midway between May 30 and June 26, 1549, and located it somewhere along the southern shore of Tampa Bay.[4] While our Brother's Religious life at least was not cast in the high standing of his two martyred companions, his death was no less glorious. His reward was no doubt the same.

Brother Fuentes has the honor of being the first lay Brother martyr within the present territory of the United States, of whose death we have any record. At least the writer has seen no account or declaration of the martyrdom of any other before this time. Father John de Padilla, a Franciscan, who was murdered in New Mexico about 1542, is our proto-martyr known by name. But Fuentes, de Peñalos, and Cancer were the first whom we could claim, for Florida became a part of our national domain before New Mexico. All four of them, together with others who suffered in the same way for the Faith (whether in the South or in the North, in the East or in the West), form bright pages in the history of our American Church. We should treasure their memories, be they of high or low estate.

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[4]See note 5 in the preceding paper, and the last paragraph but one of the paper itself.

Father John Garcia[1]

Father Gregory de Beteta, as may be seen from the sketch of Cancer, played a conspicuous part in the historic Floridian expedition of which we have told in the last three memoirs. Evidently he was second in command of the little band of missionaries.[2] However, we defer the outline of his life to a later place in these pages. Eleven years after the martyrdom of Cancer, de Peñalosa, and Fuentes, having meanwhile declined a bishop's miter, he returned to Florida that he might end his days in labor among the Indians whom he had long yearned to see brought into the fold of Christ. For this reason, the sketch of him will be given in connection with the attempt of Tristan de Luna y Arellano and Angel de Villafañe to colonize the peninsula.

Accordingly, Father John Garcia is the only member of Cancer's apostolic party left to be characterized here. He was certainly a native of Spain; and the family name Garcia, which is common in that country, shows him to have been of fine stock. But unfortunately the historians are silent about the date and locality of his birth. His associations with his friend, Father Gregory de Beteta, suggest that the two men were of practically the same age. The latter made this Religious profession at Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, on September, 29, 1533.[3] Considering that he had already graduated from the school of law at the university of that city when he entered the Order of Saint Dominic, and that his profession was delayed through sickness, we are induced to place de Beteta's birth about the end of the first, or the beginning of the second decade of the sixteenth century. This surely also approximates the date of Garcia's.

Other points on which the writers fail to enlighten us are when and in what convent Father Garcia became a Friar Preacher and was ordained to the priesthood. It was certainly in his home land. If he were the same Father John Garcia, as he probably was, who Father Alphonsus Fernandez says had greatly edified the community of Saint Stephen's by his pious life,[4] there it was that he donned the habit of Saint Dominic, studied, and received sacred

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[1]Sources:—Barcia; Beteta, de; Cancer; Davila y Padilla; Lowery; Remesal, de; Shea; Smith; Ternaux-Compans; Vega—all as in note 1 to sketch of Cancer; Cuervo, *op. cit.*, I, 98-103, II, 131-137, and III, 208-214.

[2]This is shown by his and Cancer's account noted in the sketch of Cancer.

[3]All three of the histories of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, published by Cuervo give this date.

[4]Cuervo, *op. cit.*, I, 315.

orders. In this case also, he was most likely a companion of Father de Beteta, though perhaps somewhat younger.

No author whom we have seen gives the date of our missionary's coming to the New World, or tells in what part of Spain's American possessions he first labored. Here again his connection with de Beteta comes to our aid by strongly indicating that they came together, with a band of confrères, directly from Spain to Mexico. This was apparently about 1540. De Beteta soon found his way down among the Mixtecs and Zapotecs, southern tribes of Mexican Indians who roamed through the mountains and over the high table-lands of the present departments of Guerrero, Puebla, and Oaxaca.[5] It is quite probable, though not certain, that Garcia accompanied him thither; and it was perhaps while there that they first came into contact with incomparable Father Louis Cancer de Barrastro, as he passed back and forth on his errands of spiritual mercy. But Garcia could hardly have remained long in these parts before he was called back to Mexico Province for similar work in that civic department of the colony.

The failure of the various expeditions of the conquistadors in Florida, especially that of the powerful force under Hernando de Soto, rather staggered the adjacent colonies to the west and south, for the Spanish forces had quickly prevailed everywhere else. This fact gave the impression that the natives on the northern shores of the Gulf of Mexico were no less numerous than brave. In like manner, it fired the Friars Preacher with a longing to tame, convert, and civilize the various tribes there, as well as to induce them to acknowledge the sovereignty of his Catholic majesty of Spain, by kindness and the word of God. They had done this in the case of the followers of Don Henry (Enrique) in the mountains of Hispaniola, or Haiti; and in Tuzulutlan, or Vera Paz, Guatemala. In both places the sword and bayonet had signally failed. Why could they not, therefore, do the same in Florida, as all the northern country was then called? They felt that, could this feat be accomplished, almost innumerable lives might be saved from perishing in war, and an immeasurable field opened up for apostolic activity free from the curse of slavery.

Evidently the Fathers as a whole were filled with this idea and desire. One of those who advocated it in a special manner, as has

[5] All the Spanish authorities tell of de Beteta being in those parts; but they do not say positively that Garcia was with him. However, there are indications that he labored there. The two men were evidently close friends.

been seen, was Father Louis Cancer. Another was Father Gregory de Beteta. Still a third was the subject of the present paper, Father John Garcia. To these, no doubt, we should add Father James (Diego) de Peñalosa and Brother Fuentes. Under the ardent impulse, de Beteta gave up his post among the Zapotecs and Mixtecs, who already had a number of missionaries in their country, and went to Mexico City, where he hoped to obtain the necessary authorization and help for the pious enterprise. On his arrival at the Mexican capital, he found zealous Father Garcia full of the same holy ambition, probably even trying to make arrangements to carry it into effect.[6] This was apparently late in 1545, or early in 1546. The ecclesiastical superiors readily gave their consent to the project. But the civil powers appear to have declined to assist it, possibly in part through fear of influential holders of Indian slaves, and in part because no approval had been received from the mother-country.

Father de Peñalosa and Brother Fuentes must have been prevented from joining their two confrères on this occasion by other duties. At any rate, Fathers Garcia and de Beteta determined to go to Florida alone, and by land. With the blessing and best wishes of the Most Rev. John de Zumárraga, O.F.M., the Archbishop, and their provincial, most likely the Very Rev. Peter Delgado, and the good-will of their brethren in general, they started on the long journey afoot. The universal ignorance, at the time, of the geography of the country, the immeasurable distances, and the impassable obstacles in the way combined with the zeal of the pair of Friars Preacher to cause them to undertake what was impossible. Day after day they trudged along, using the earth for a bed at night, with the roof of the heavens as their only protection. For the most part they were obliged to subsist on herbs they plucked in the wilds through which they passed. It must have been their kindly and amiable dispositions that shielded them from the roving bands of aborigines whom they met from time to time, whilst providence preserved them from attacks by savage beasts.

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[6]See the preceding note. The three histories published by Father Cuervo simply tell of Father Garcia, in this connection, as "another Religious of the same spirit as Father de Beteta" (*otro religioso de su espiritu*). Yet Father Davila y Padilla (*op. cit.*, p. 573), whom these authors had certainly seen, is very explicit in declaring that the "other Religious" was John Garcia. Fernandez, de Araya, and de Quintana were simply writing a sketch of the life of de Beteta. So they did not trouble themselves to give us the name of Garcia. We can hardly excuse them for this neglect.

Means of defense the two Friars Preacher had not. Only the courage given them by their trust in God and their zeal for the salvation of souls sustained them in their lonely, weary jaunt. Their sole compass to guide their direction was the sun; but this could help them little, with their imperfect knowledge of the lay of the land. Still on and on they travelled, halting to preach the message of Christ to the few straggling Indians they came upon. None of these knew aught of Florida. Consequently they could give no information as to where or how it could be found. Again and again the missionaries were obliged to search for days in order to find a place to ford a stream, or discover a pass through which they could cross a mountain chain. How far they journeyed will never be known. Eventually, after months of vain effort, they realized that they had undertaken a hopeless task. They therefore retraced their steps to Mexico City, determined that they would await there an opportunity of getting to the goal of their spiritual ambition by water.

One may well believe the historians who give us to understand that Garcia and de Beteta were in a sad plight when they reached the convent in the Mexican capital from which they started on their brave, but futile, journey in the cause of religion.[7] No doubt their shoes had been worn out, leaving them barefooted; their habits torn in tatters, and replaced by the skins of wild animals obtained from the natives; their bodies weak and emaciated from walking, exposure, and starvation. However, their spirit was not broken; nor their zeal lessened; nor their determination weakened. We are told that Father de Beteta was a man of extraordinary physical endurance and mental fortitude. The same must have been true of Father Garcia.

In the outlines of Gregory de Beteta's life we read that Father Louis Cancer found the two missionaries at the Convent of Saint Dominic, Mexico City, when he arrived there, on his way from Tuzulutlan to Spain, in the second half of 1546. The question of Florida's conversion and humane conquest was earnestly discussed by them; and it was decided that the apostle of Vera Cruz, while in the mother-country, should try to obtain a royal decree for the enterprise, together with a command from Charles V to Don Antonio de Mendoza, the Viceroy of New Spain, ordering him to provide them with all the necessaries and to have them taken to whatever part of Florida they should designate. While

[7] Practically all the Spanish authorities tell of the unspeakable hardships of this journey.

this statement may not be correct in all respects, we have no reason to doubt that it is true in the main. It induces us, in default of any date being given of their first attempt to reach Florida, to believe that the two missionaries had just returned to Mexico City, when Cancer reached there, possibly even during his stay in the colonial metropolis.

Whether Father James de Peñalosa and Brother Fuentes actually became a party to the pious project at this time we do not know. Yet there is every reason to think that they then profferred their services, which were gladly received. Nor can it be said for certain if the "first apostle of The Land of War" did more, prior to his departure, than strongly urge the undertaking, and promise to do all he could in its behalf with the royal court. The indications are that he really did not decide to take a personal part in such an enterprise until after he reached Europe. There, it will be recalled, he consented to take charge of a little missionary band to be collected in Spain itself for Florida. This was perhaps at the instigation of de Las Casas and de Ladrada. Although no mention is made of them in the letters of Tuzulutan's apostle brought out in the sketch of him, he doubtless hoped to add the confrères gathered abroad to those in America waiting word of the result of his efforts.

Cancer, as has been seen, returned to Mexico, sometime in 1548, armed with legal documents for all he had asked. He found Garcia and the others who were to be his companions in labor still at Saint Dominic's Convent, in the Mexican capital, whence they had meanwhile devoted themselves largely to work on Indian missions in that and neighboring provinces. They eagerly joined him.[8] The story of their travels thence until the death of de Peñalosa, Fuentes, and Cancer has been briefly told in the sketches of the three martyrs. We will not repeat it. Garcia is noted in the official account of Cancer as going ashore several times along the Floridian coast. At one place, where he landed, he felt that they should remain and test the Indians there, as they seemed to show a friendly spirit. This was where Father de Peñalosa and Brother Fuentes were spirited away by the natives.[9]

At Port Espiritu Santo, John Muños, who had been held as a slave by the Indians since the expedition of Hernando de Soto,

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[8]It is strange that Father Alphonsus Fernandez, the author of the earliest history of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, published by Cuervo, does not mention this historic expedition to Florida in his sketch of de Beteta.

[9]See Cancer's and de Beteta's account in the sketch of Cancer.

escaped from them to the vessel of the Friars Preacher. From him the three remaining fathers learned that de Peñalosa and Fuentes had been cruelly put to death. This information convinced Garcia and de Beteta that it were futile to attempt the work of conversion in that vicinity, and that they should seek some other less hostile locality. Cancer, on the contrary, resolved to stay where they were. Yet he did not use his influence as superior to induce his two confrères to follow his example. They accompanied him almost to the shore in the rowboat which they carried with their brigantine, and witnessed his martyrdom soon after he reached land.[10]

Undoubtedly this spectacle filled the hearts of the two Friars Preacher with great sorrow. Perhaps it even quickened their zeal all the more. When they returned to the brigantine, they begged the captain, John de Arana, to take them to a more distant port, where they might find the Indians better disposed and try to convert them. But de Arana was a headstrong man. Notwithstanding the positive and explicit orders of both the King of Spain and the Viceroy of Mexico that he should carry the missionaries to whatever parts of the Floridian coast they wished, he turned a deaf ear to their appeals. They were, therefore, compelled to return to Mexico. They reached Vera Cruz on July 19, 1549, perhaps four or five months after they had sailed from the same place on their mission of converting and civilizing the Indians of Florida.[11]

Thus ended in failure one of the noblest and most heroic missionary efforts recorded in history. Although it produced no good results, as far as man can see, one can but admire the zeal, the charity, the purity of heart, the singlemindedness of all who took part in it. Father John Garcia perhaps deserves as much praise as the others. That it failed must be attributed, largely at least, to the cruel treatment which the red man of Florida had received from the white man of Spain. Certainly it was through no fault of the five missionaries.

From this time, no doubt because of the proclivity of historians unduly to limit themselves to those in authority, or who fill high places, we find no further record of Father Garcia. Then, too, the great Friars Preacher were so numerous in Spanish America at that time that many of them are not mentioned except under impelling circumstances. How long he continued to labor, or

[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*

when, where, or how he died we do not know. The fact that he was not with the noble band of his confrères, among them his friend, Gregory de Beteta, who sought to convert and civilize Florida some years later (1559-1561), indicates that he was no longer capable of hard toil, or perhaps had gone to receive the reward of his faithful life. Franco (page 558) places a Peter Garcia in his list of saintly Dominicans in Mexico, makes him die in 1563, and says he came from the Province of Spain, just as did Gregory de Beteta. We wonder if there may be a clerical or other error in the first name, and if this holy man was the John Garcia of Florida fame.

FATHER JAMES (DIEGO) DE LA CRUZ AND COMPANIONS[1]

Father de la Cruz

In Father James (Diego) de la Cruz, we have one of those striking examples of the influence of youthful training over a man's later life with which Church annals abound. He was a native of Spain; but the historians, as was quite usual at that time, give us neither the date nor the locality of his birth. They also fail to tell us who was his father, or who his mother. We regret this oversight, for the names of such good Christian parents deserve to be perpetuated in history. From his tenderest years, as they were wealthy, they not only drilled him well in his religion, but also gave him every intellectual advantage. Nature blessed him with an honest disposition, a love for work, and a good mind and memory. Thus every promise was held out to him for an honorable, prosperous career at home. However, like many of the young men of his day, he suffered himself to be lured to America by the reports of the fabulous riches which could be surely and quickly obtained in the new Spanish transatlantic possessions.

The ambitious cavalier first settled in Hispaniola. There, in the eagerness of his young manhood for wealth, he seems to have thought little of honesty or the rights of others. Perhaps one of the worst things he did was to follow the rather common example of the *conquistadors* in their ill-treatment of the Indians in order to amass a fortune, while they themselves led an easy, luxurious life. Happily, it was not long before the early lessons which he had received at home in his boyhood days induced him to recoil

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[1]Sources:—Barcia, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-31; Cuervo, *op. cit.*, I, 123-125, II, 94, 143-152, III, 273-277; Davila y Padilla, *op. cit.*, pp. 341-363; Lowery, *op. cit.*, 352-353; Ruidías y Caravía, Eugénio, *La Florida*, Madrid, 1893, CV-CVIII; Shea, "Missions Among the Indians," pp. 49-50, "Church in Colonial Days," p. 126, and "Ancient Florida," in Winsor, *op. cit.*, II, 256. Father Augustine Davila y Padilla is the principal source. The other writers mentioned draw from him. Father Cuervo's "Historiadores" write of Brother Mark de Mena, who was a son of Saint Sephen's Salamanca, and was on his way back to Spain at this time. They tell of Father James de la Cruz and his other companions in connection with Brother Mark. As there was no question of missionary work by the priests, or of a settlement by the Spaniards, our historians pass over the sad incident with a few words. However, it comes within the sphere of the present work.

from such brutality. Indeed, his better nature rebelled against it. Quite likely the Friar-Preacher missionaries on the island played no little part in his conversion, as they did in that of ever so many other holders of slaves.

At any rate, young James de la Cruz determined to leave Hispaniola, which he now called "a land of blood," and to go to New Spain, the name by which Mexico was then ordinarily known. There he began life anew at the age of thirty years, resolved never again to torture his conscience or endanger the salvation of his soul by cruelty to any man. Just how long he remained in the world after this we do not know. But God, perhaps in reward for his noble Christian, nay, heroic, action, soon drew him nearer to Himself by calling him to labor as a messenger of the Gospel. He received the habit and took the vows of a Friar Preacher at Saint Dominic's, Mexico City. We are not told the date; yet the saintly Father Dominic de Betanzos, "the father of the Mexican Province," and long superior there, likely presided at these sacred ceremonies.[2]

From the beginning of his novitiate, Father de La Cruz gave unmistakable proof of a true vocation. His observance of Rule, humility, modesty, obedience, charity, piety, and thirst for personal perfection made him a model of the religious life. His one thought, after prayer to God, seemed to be to do good to his neighbor, and to make amends for his past delinquencies, whether real or fancied. Through industry and rare talents he made rapid progress in his studies. In due course of time, he was advanced to the priesthood. Then he evidently taught for some years, for he later received the degree of "master in sacred theology."[3] Indeed, he was considered a scholar of great erudition in a province where there was no dearth of learned men. Many of its members were from Spain, where the schools of their Order were in the heyday of their glory; whilst those in Mexico itself, despite the perhaps all too prevailing opinion to the contrary, were conducted along the same lines.

Nature also blessed our Friar Preacher with a splendid gift of eloquence. This accomplishment, no doubt, combined with his burning zeal for the salvation of souls to induce the superiors frequently to employ him in the active ministry even while he filled

[2]It is a pity that Father Davila y Padilla does not give us the dates of these incidents.

[3]We are not told the date of either his ordination or the reception of this dignity.

the professor's chair. From the time of the relinquishment of this post, it was his daily occupation. He journeyed everywhere—always afoot; preached everywhere. His earnest sermons never failed to bring tears to the eyes of his audience, whilst his fervor and spirit of contrition caused his own to shed them copiously. Father Davila y Padilla assures us that, besides being an eminent theologian and a scriptural scholar of note, he was likewise well versed in various other fields of knowledge. His language was exquisite. This, of course, rendered his discourses all the more acceptable to the erudite. Yet he could come down to the level of the uneducated, and did not fail to accommodate himself to circumstances. Thus he was a favorite with every class. Crowds flocked to hear him. By the Indians, in whom he took the kindliest interest, he was loved as a father.

While very severe with himself, the missionary was benevolent to others—especially good to the red man. Ever the priest of God, his exemplary life and faithful labors edified all; his uniform gentleness won their hearts. In whatever way he was employed, he manifested fine prudence, judgment, and practical ability. For this reason, it was but natural that he should often be chosen for responsible positions, as well as entrusted with important affairs, in his province. In none of these did he ever fail to acquit himself in a way that resulted in benefit to religion no less than in credit to himself. Out of the Order, as in it, he was most useful. The bishops esteemed him, and sought his services and advice. A true Friar Preacher, afire for the salvation of souls and the spread of Christ's kingdom on earth, they always found him ready to give the best that was in him in behalf of the Church.

So toiled on incessantly Father James de la Cruz in his adopted land of Mexico. But, after years of hard, fruitful labor, he determined, if he could obtain permission, to go back to Europe. He wished to spend the rest of his days preaching to the poor in the mountains, villages, and small towns of Spain, where the priests were few and the people hungering for the word of God. Possibly, on the one hand, age had begun to tell on his strength, and he feared lest he should not be able to bear the hardships of apostolic life in the wilds of the New World much longer. On the other, he perhaps felt that, were he again in his native country, he might be spared for much good work among the ignorant, lowly, and neglected. He believed they needed him, and they belonged to the class whom he loved with a special affection. That was enough to arouse his zeal in their behalf. It is said that the holy

man was convinced that it was the will of God that he should return.

As was only natural, the authorities of the Order in Mexico were quite loath to lose the services and example of so valuable and excellent a subject. Many of the other Fathers also strongly opposed his departure. Even the bishops and faithful appear to have added their protests. In the end, however, Father de la Cruz was allowed to obey what he sincerely believed to be a call from heaven. No sooner did he receive the good word from the provincial, Father Andrew Moguer, whose term of office was near its close, than he made ready to return home with a fleet laden with treasure and about to sail from Vera Cruz for Spain.[4] Four other Friar-Preacher missionaries, sketches of whom will follow this, were with him. This was in the first days of April, 1553. His going away caused the Province of Mexico much sorrow; but this anguish could not be compared with that which the Fathers experienced when they received word of the disaster to the fleet of ships with which he had left them.

The flotilla, with its precious cargo of human beings, gold, and silver, reached Havana in safety. Hardly had it got well started on its way from Cuba when it was caught in a tempestuous storm, a frequent occurrence in those parts, carried in a northwesterly direction, and wrecked somewhere on the upper coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Florida is given by the old authors as the place of the disaster. However, as will be recalled, that name was then applied by the Spaniards to all the vast stretch of country from our southern Atlantic possibly almost to the present Mexico. Modern writers are not of one mind as to where the accident occurred. Some are disposed to think it happened along the shore of Texas.[5] Yet, if one may judge from the account of the wanderings of those left on land, it seems quite probable that they lost their boats considerably east of the Mississippi River.

Only two of the many vessels escaped destruction. One of these returned to Vera Cruz (or San Juan de Ulúa) with the sad news. The other, although in bad plight, continued its journey to Spain.[6] Of the thousand men, women, and children aboard

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[4]This appreciation is taken from Davila y Padilla, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-353.
[5]Shea, "Church in colonial Days," p. 126.
[6]On what authority we do not know, Doctor Shea (*ibid.*) says three of the vessels went on to Spain. Davila y Padilla says only one. San Juan de Ulúa, which is ordinarily given as the place of arrival in, or departure from, Mexico during the early years of Mexican history is a fortress on a small island in the harbor of the present Vera Cruz.

the part of the flotilla that foundered, not more than three hundred succeeded in gaining the shore. Among those saved were Father James de la Cruz and his four Religious confrères mentioned above. The stranded wayfarers, so bewildered that they knew not what to do, lingered for a few days at the place of the catastrophe. Then they determined to attempt to reach Mexico by foot, marching along the coast, and trusting to the few swords, one or two crossbows, and some other small arms saved from the shipwreck for protection against the Indians.

It was a desperate endeavor necessitated by the circumstances. Many of the unfortunate Spaniards were without shoes; not a few wore only cloths wrapped around their bodies. They were compelled to subsist on herbs and the few shellfish they could find on the shore. Frequently the water was so brackish that they could not drink it. The natives gave them little rest. Ordinarily their manifestations of hostility were open; but they appear to have artfully reserved their fiercest attacks until the distressed wanderers were in the act of crossing some river. On one such an occasion, fairly early in the flight, a good clergyman (*clerigo*), while throwing away useless luggage, accidently upset an arbalest (*ballesta*), which fell from the crude, improvised raft into the swift current. After this incident, for they were quick to notice the absence of this more formidable weapon of defense, the red men grew bolder, and approached nearer in order to discharge their arrows with greater effect.

Eventually one tribe of Indians craftily led the Spaniards into the belief that they pursued them merely in order to obtain their clothing. The disheartened wayfarers, therefore, stripped themselves of all they wore, in the hope that they would then be suffered to continue their march without further molestation. For the sake of modesty, they now divided into two parties—one composed of the men, and the other of the women and children. A few expert swordsmen followed behind the latter the better to protect them. It was not long before they discovered that they had been deceived, for the savages soon began to press them harder. Not merely were the missiles of the aborigines more fatal to the naked bodies of the fugitives; exposure also caused them great suffering.

From this time, the Spaniards, whose ranks had already been considerably thinned, began to die and to be killed in greater numbers. At the fording of the River of Palms (*Rio de las Palmas*), as they called it, the remainder of the women and children fell

victims of the arrow or the tomahawk.[7] In another onslaught, shortly after this stream had been crossed, fifty more of the men lost their lives. Here Father James de la Cruz and Father Hernando de Mendez, so badly injured that they could not keep pace with their compatriots, hid themselves in brushwood. When the conflict was over, and neither friend nor foe could be seen, they decided to retrace their steps, as best they could, hoping against hope that they might come upon some well-disposed tribe of natives, with whom they could live, and perhaps bring them to the knowledge and service of the one true God.

It was with great pain and difficulty that the two Friars Preacher dragged their wounded and weakened bodies along until they finally regained the River of Palms. Here Father James de la Cruz died of his injuries, fever, and exposure. The sad event, we think may be safely placed in 1553. Father Hernando de Mendez, himself more dead than alive, despite his enfeebled condition, dug a grave in the sand, buried his friend, and offered a fervent prayer to God for his soul. While the place of the lonely grave of this man of God is not certain, we are inclined to think it is somewhere in southern Louisiana, or perhaps in southeastern Texas.[8] He lived the life of a saint, and died the death of a martyr. Father Franco (*op. cit.*, page 558) classes him among the Mexican Province's most holy men.

Father Hernando de Mendez[1]

Father Hernando de Mendez is the only one of the Friars Preacher sketched in these pages known certainly to have been born in the New World. He was a native of Mexico; but we have nowhere found the date of his birth, or discovered what part

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[7]The first stream mentioned by name by the Spaniards was the Great River (*El Rio Bravo*), which they so designated because of its size and strong current. It emptied into the Gulf of Mexico; and it was very likely the Mississippi, which the description fits. Other Spanish documents tell of a *Rio Bravo*, which was apparently somewhere in Texas. Perhaps this is responsible for Doctor Shea's opinion. But the duration of the wanderings of the shipwrecked Spaniards indicates that they were cast ashore east of the Mississippi. The River of Palms was certainly much farther west than the *Rio Bravo*. We will not try to determine precisely what stream it was; for, in the imperfect knowledge of the geography of the country at that time, the conquistadors called a number of rivers *Rio de las Palmas*. We are inclined to think that the one in question here was in southern Louisiana, or perhaps in southeastern Texas.

[8]See the preceding note.

[1]On the sources for this memoir, and remarks about them, see note 1 to the preceding sketch; that is, of Father James de la Cruz.

of the present republic of that name has the honor of being his birthplace. His parents, like many of the colonists, possessed considerable wealth. So were they good Christians, who watched with care over their son's early training, whether spiritual or intellectual. Unfortunately we could not learn their names. A dutiful child, he did not, as was often the case with the sons of well-to-do pioneers, waste the opportunities which were given to him.

God blessed Hernando with a pure heart and many talents. Nature crowned these gifts with a charming disposition. That he soon determined to devote himself to the spread of the kingdom of Christ on earth is evident from the fact that he received the habit of the Friar Preacher at the age of eighteen years, in the Convent of Saint Dominic, Mexico City, It was a true vocation. From the start, he showed himself to be a man of profound piety, as well as endowed with rare mental qualities. Besides, he had the advantage of being among the first confrères schooled under the direction of saintly Father Francis Dominic de Betanzos, the father of the province and the founder of the convent. Hernando shone even among the noble gallaxy of athletes of the Faith formed by that celebrated spiritual master. Indeed, he seemed made for the Religious life. No doubt he was a source of great consolation to de Betanzos, for the holy man could but feel that the enlistment of such characters insured the success of that part of his Order for which he had labored so hard and suffered so much.

Doubtless it was at this time that Father de Mendez first came into contact with the subject of the preceding memoir, James de la Cruz. They seem to have studied together. Hernando was evidently much the younger. Yet, despite the difference in their ages, the two Friars Preacher soon contracted an intimate and confidential friendship which continued throughout their lives. No wonder, for they were cast in the same mold, no less than filled with the same earnestness in the cause of Christ and the salvation of souls. Anyway, a disparity in years is little or no obstacle to an attachment between true men of God. One might call Hernando and James spiritual rivals, the one trying to outdo the other in sanctity, zeal, and mortification. Their spirit of emulation edified all, while it brought them in closer union.

His progress in his studies for the priesthood was as rapid as that which he made in the way of perfection, for to a splendid mind and retentive memory he added an industrious temperament. We are not told the date or place of his ordination. Yet it is certain that it was administered by either Archbishop Zumárraga,

O.F.M., of Mexico City, or the Right Rev. Julian Garcés, O.P., the first Bishop of the Diocese of Tlascala (now Puebla de los Angeles), if not even the first for all New Spain.[2]

By this time, Father Hernando de Mendez had become an excellent philosopher, theologian, and linguist. In a short while, as he was appointed to apostolic duty, he gained a wide reputation by his accomplishments. Yet he was principally known through his missionary work. He spoke the language of the Mexican Indians, in the midst of whom he grew into manhood, not only with great fluency, but also with an accent which the natives themselves admired not a little. Another attainment which served him well in his ministry was a thorough knowledge of music. It aided him particularly in his work among the aborigines. They were quite fond of rhythmic melody and harmony, and never tired of repeating the songs of divine praise which they learned from the missionaries. Apart from his own interest in the art, he loved to teach them sacred hymns and other church music both in order to increase their devotion and to impress the Christian doctrine more firmly on their minds. He effected untold good in this way.

Back and forth from province to province, or from place to place, our Friar Preacher travelled in the fulfillment of his ministerial duties. He preached everywhere. His reputation and splendid oratory never failed to draw large crowds for his sermons, whether they were to the white man or to the red man, to the learned or to the unlettered. All felt that it was a treat to hear him. Frequently he labored with his friend, Father James de la Cruz. They liked to be together, for the one was as a spur to the spiritual energy of the other. They were an extraordinary pair, known far and wide for their excellent team-work.

While the accomplishments and untiring toils of Father Hernando de Mendez excited the admiration of every one, whether within the Order or without, his kindly disposition, charity, and goodness of heart won their love. His zeal, devotion, humility, and obedience were almost phenomenal. In his spirit of mortification, like James de la Cruz, he ever went afoot on his apostolic journeys, however distant, rough, or laborious they might be. If he could possibly take his staff and make his way, nothing could induce him to travel otherwise. Never was he known to hesitate when called by the voice of duty or authority. Withal he was a

[2]Zummáraga was nominated an archbishop, but died a short time before the bulls reached Mexico City. He and Garcés were among the greatest prelates of early Latin America.

man of good judgment, much prudence, and no mean executive ability. Time and again was he entrusted with important affairs, or elected to positions of responsibility. Always did he justify the confidence reposed in him.

The Indians were a special object of the faithful missionary's care and affection. He loved them—did all he could for them, both spiritually and temporally. No sacrifice or toil was too great for him cheerfully to undergo in their behalf. Indeed, it seems to have been his tenderness of heart for the natives that eventually determined him to seek another field of labor. It may be, too, that his intimate friendship for good Father James de la Cruz had its part in this resolution; and that he wished to become a co-laborer with his beloved confrère in the apostolate of preaching to the poor and ignorant in the mountains, villages, and small towns of Spain. In any case, discouraged at the sight of the many wrongs to which he saw the aborigines subjected, and which, try as he would, he found himself powerless to ameliorate, he sought permission to go to the mother-country that he might end his days there. Possibly he had never seen it, for he was too zealous a minister of Christ to rest from his ministerial work, unless obliged by necessity.

It was no easy matter for the holy man to obtain the consent of his superiors to take such a step. They were not at all willing to suffer the loss of so good and serviceable a subject. Others also entered their protests against his departure from Mexico. However, he was finally allowed to follow the bent of his mind. Fathers Hernando de Mendez and James de la Cruz, as stated in the previous sketch, left New Spain with the same fleet, together with three other of their confrères.

The story of our Friar Preacher's misfortunes from this time until the death of Father James de la Cruz has already been told. When he had buried his friend, with his own hands, on the banks of the River of Palms (*Rio de las Palmas*), Father de Mendez, in spite of his wounds and weakness, continued his way eastward.[3] After a while he fell in with one Francis Vasquez, a Christian gentleman who was a close friend of him and Father de la Cruz in Mexico. Vasquez started to Spain with them, was in the shipwreck, and travelled with the unfortunates as far as the conflict with the natives a little to the west of the River of Palms. There he hid in the undergrowth, as they had done, and was now trying to get back stealthily to the place of the disaster in the hope that he

[3]For the River of Palms see note 7 of the preceding paper.

might be found there by the crew of some ship which he felt would be sent to that shore in order to salvage the wreckage.

Father de Mendez and Vasquez, whose bonds of friendship were strengthened by their solitary and dangerous situation, soon resumed their eastward journey. Somewhat later they chanced upon a negress, who was evidently being taken to Spain by some lady, but had been in the naval catastrophe, and had escaped in the slaughter of the women and children on the eastern bank of the River of Palms by concealing herself in the bulrushes which grew along the stream. Since then she had wandered about aimlessly. She was delighted to see de Mendez and Vasquez, and proved an angel in disguise to the sick and wounded priest, for she was a good practical nurse.

Father Hernando became steadily weaker. For this reason, the trio took refuge on a hill covered with trees and brushwood. There they lived in hiding for about seven weeks. Day by day the faithful negress, for her dark skin was less apt to attract the attention of any natives who might happen to pass that way, stole out from their place of concealment to gather herbs for the three to eat. The choicest of these, because of his condition, she always reserved for the beloved clergyman. With a mother's care she tried to heal his wounds by bathing them and keeping them free of infection. But on one occasion, when she left the place on her usual errand of mercy, the poor woman fell into the hands of a band of Indians who put her to death.[4]

From this time the missionary grew worse, for his companion, friend though he was, could not attend to him as deftly as the good negress had done. He died a holy death shortly afterwards, sometime before the close of 1553. Francis Vasquez buried him in the same way that he himself had laid Father James de la Cruz to rest in the sands of the River of Palms. Vasquez now made his way alone to the place where the rich fleet had been wrecked. There he remained in concealment, and subsisted on herbs and shell-fish until sometime in 1554, when he was rescued by Spaniards who came in a vessel to search for whatever of the lost treasure and persons could be found. It was through Vasquez that the knowledge of the last days of the two noted Friars Preacher, together with the manner of their deaths, was preserved. Father Hernando de Mendez' life was not less saintly than that of his friend Father James de la Cruz; nor his death less martyr-

[4]Evidently this negro woman was a good Christian, and a slave of some Spaniard in Mexico. The fidelity of such persons was often extraordinary.

like or glorious. In his continuation of the "History of the Province of Saint James, Mexico," Father Alphonsus Franco y Ortega also includes him in the list of those of its members who were known to have practised virtue to a heroic degree.[5]

Brother John de Mena[1]

In a work like his "History of the Province of Saint James, Mexico," with many things to be recounted, one can easily understand why Father Augustine Davila y Padilla should often be brief, or his outlines even somewhat incomplete at times. It was necessary in order that the volume should not become immense and unwieldy. Yet we of today find it hard to pardon the omission of the birthplaces, together with the dates of the births, religious professions, and ordinations, of persons whose lives he sketches (be it ever so concisely) in his invaluable book. However, we should remember that the ideas of the writers of centuries ago differed from those of our modern authors. With the good men of the past such things went as matters of course. They no doubt often knew the facts; yet, as they saw no religion or inspiration to religion in them, they took little pains to transmit them to posterity. We of today want those driblets. They rarely told them, except in the cases of the at least almost kingly born, the high in position, or the very widely known before the eyes of the world.

Thus it is again that we are not apprized when Brother John de Mena was born, or whether he first saw the light of day in Spain proper, or in Spanish America. Still we are convinced that he was a native of the Old World. When he came to the New, or where he first settled, we do not know. He became a Friar Preacher in Mexico, taking the habit and making his profession, as a lay Brother, in Saint Dominic's Convent, Mexico City—when we can not say. Of his previous life in the world nothing is recorded, and but little of his career as a Religious. However, the brief, sugestive words of praise which Father Davila y Padilla writes of him open up a vista which reveals a beautiful character. One may even suscpect that, though he might have entered the Order of Saint Dominic as a cleric, he chose the lowlier state of a lay Brother out of humility. This was almost certainly the

[5]Franco, *op. cit.*, p. 558. Davila y Padilla gives a brief sketch of Father de Mendez' life on pages 353-354 of his "Historia."

[1]For the sources see note 1 to chapter on Father James de la Cruz.

case, if he were a relation of Brother Mark de Mena, of whom we shall give a sketch a little later.[2]

Certain it is that Brother John was in every way a model religious from the time he donned the habit of the Saint from Caleruega, Spain. His spirit of piety combined with his many virtues, charity, and gentle disposition to make him universally loved by his brethren. We have a volume in this alone. Because of a rare devotion to duty, he spent every available moment in some work or other belonging to the status of a lay Brother in the Order. His kindness of heart and goodness towards the sick and infirm caused him to be appointed infirmarian of the great convent in Mexico City, which was filled with students, professors, and missionaries. He seems to have held the delicate position until he entered on the fatal journey of which we have told in the two previous chapters. We are even assured that he made a perpetual prayer of the many acts of corporal mercy which he performed while employed in this post. We need no better encomium of his character as a man of God.[3]

John de Mena sailed from San Juan de Ulúa (or Vera Cruz), in the first days of April, 1553, with Fathers James de la Cruz, Hernando de Mendez, and John Ferrer, and Brother Mark de Mena. Davila y Padilla does not give the reason for John's intended journey to Spain. Yet, as there is no indication that he expected to remain there, the visit was most likely given to him in reward for his long, faithful services at the Convent of Saint Dominic, Mexico City. It is possible, however, that he had been appointed to accompany Father John Ferrer, who was bound for Rome, or Brother Mark de Mena, who seems to have been going to the mother-country on business. In those days the Friars Preacher rarely travelled great distances without at least one confrère as a companion. Practically never do we find them alone.

The harrowing story of the unfortunate Spaniards from the time of their shipwreck on the coast of Florida until they reached the River of Palms has been told in the sketch of Father James de la Cruz. Brother John de Mena suffered in common with the rest. No doubt it was through the suddenness of the attack of the Indians, when they fell upon the women and children on the

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[2]Father Franco (page 558) places Brother John de Mena in his list of priests. However, this is evidently an oversight. Davila y Padilla says expressly that he was a lay Brother (*religioso lego*); and the work in which he was employed shows clearly that he was not a cleric. Possibly the error in Franco's history is due to its editors.

[3]All the large convents had a lay Brother appointed to look after the sick and infirm; and as a rule good men were selected for the purpose.

east bank of the stream, that he, Father John Ferrer, Brother Mark de Mena, and two sailors became separated from their compatriots. By chance they discovered an Indian canoe, with which they crossed one arm of the river, and spent a sleepless night on an island, where trees and shrubbery hid them from the keen eyes of the savage.

This accident prevented the five men from being in the onslaught of the next day, mentioned in the record of de la Cruz as happening a short distance west of Rio de las Palmas.[4] When, early the next morning, they crossed the other arm of the river and reached the scene of the struggle, they saw no natives; but they found a number of Spaniards, some dead, some in the agony of death, and some mortally wounded and crying for water to quench their feverish thirst. Evidently Fathers James de la Cruz and Hernando de Mendez, though severely injured, had managed to drag themselves away from the place before their arrival, for they were not seen there. Brothers John and Mark de Mena, who were perhaps relatives, did whatever they could in order to assuage the tortures of those of their comrades who were still alive. Father John Ferrer, of course, first gave his attention to their spiritual needs. Then he extended a helping hand to his two confrères in aid of the sufferers.

This work of corporal and spiritual mercy continued until late in the night, when perhaps the last of the wounded had surrendered their souls to God, or were no longer capable of pain. Then the three Friars Preacher and two sailors hastened on to join their fleeing companions, who had been driven from the field of the conflict. It was not until the next night that they overtook them. The natives had disappeared, and the white men had halted for a much-needed rest. One may imagine the mutual joy caused by the reunion, for it was believed that the five comrades had fallen victims of the arrow and tomahawk either in the battle before, or in that after, the crossing of the River of Palms.

No sooner did the distressed wayfarers sufficiently recover from the exhaustion of their last combat, than they resumed their westward march. For some twenty days they were now left unmolested, and saw no trace of the red man. They hurried onward. Yet, compelled by necessity, and fancying that they were free from further pursuit by the enemy, they scattered in every direction over the parched country in search of whatever might

[4]For the River of Palms (*Rio de las Palmas*) see note 7 to the sketch of Father James de la Cruz.

help to sustain life. Not a few died of hunger and thirst. Others succumbed to their wounds or sickness. Often did the survivors come upon the prostrate form of a compatriot who had gone ahead to find food and drink, but had sunk under the weight of his sufferings. From this description it would seem certain that the Spaniards were then within the State of Texas.

Finally the remnant of those who had started on foot, from the place of the shipwreck, for the Spanish colonies of New Spain reached a river to which they applied the name of Pánuco. Possibly they believed they had come to the stream similarly called in Mexico, and were not far from the settlement at Tampico.[5] As they prepared to cross it, they were aroused by the war-whoop of the Indians who appeared again as suddenly as if they had dropped from the heavens. The surprised Spaniards sought to shield themselves from the darts and arrows of the savages by hiding in the thick undergrowth on the banks of the stream. They were soon hunted from this retreat by large voracious ants (*hormigas*), or other insects, which swarmed on their naked bodies, and the pain of whose bites compelled the unfortunate men to leave their shelter. Doubtless hoping in this way to get free of the new enemy, to swim to the opposite side of the river before the red men could overtake them, and, perhaps, to find there some means of protection, the desperate wanderers leaped into the water. As they swam they became an easy target for the aim of the natives from their numerous canoes, for an attack had been planned on both land and water.

Many of the remaining Spaniards were killed outright in this encounter. Others were so badly injured that they soon died of their wounds. Among these latter was good Brother John de Mena, who had been one of the bravest in the face of hardships and in the encouragement of others. Although struck with an arrow shot with such force that it was driven clear through his body he managed to gain the other side of the river and to drag himself along for perhaps a mile. Then he sank from pain and exhaustion. So perished a Friar Preacher who, Father Davilla y Padilla tells us, had won the love and admiration of his confrères by his kindness of heart, his fidelity to duty, his goodness, and his spirit of observance. Father Alphonsus Franco y Ortega (page 558) places him in the list of the members of Saint James'

[5]This river was certainly not the present Pánuco in Mexico.

Province, Mexico, known to have attained great heights of sanctity.[6]

Brother John de Mena perhaps died after Father James de la Cruz, and certainly sometime before Father John de Mendez. However, we put the sketch of his life in the third place because they were the first to become separated from the pursued band of Spaniards. In one respect he was less fortunate than they, for his friends could not bury him. They were too hard pressed to halt even for such a deed of love and charity. His death was the counterpart of numbers of his martyred confrères in various parts of the world, both Old and New, whose bodies were left to become the prey of wild animals or vultures, after their souls had gone to receive the reward promised by God to all who give up their lives for Him. Trinity River, Texas, suggests itself as possibly the stream on which he made the supreme sacrifice. Brother Mark de Mena found his remains the following day; but, as will be told in the sketch of him, he was too weak and had no time to give his confrère sepulture.

Father John Ferrer[1]

In but a few instances have we so deeply regretted the usual brevity of the writers of past centuries as in the case of Father John Ferrer. They tell us just enough to make us crave to know all about him; which, of course, renders one's disappointment the greater. His very patronymic is quite sufficient to give one a desire for a full knowledge of him. However, the little they do narrate shows that he was an extraordinary man, and so zealous, good, and virtuous that we perforce love and admire him.

Father John Ferrer was born in old Valencia, Spain, a city which is often called "the mother of brave men and saints." The date of his birth, the names of his parents, when he entered the Order of Saint Dominic, and the year of his ordination, no author we have seen so much as hints. Still we know that he belonged to a splendid family, which is said to be of English origin, and had an excellent Christian heritage. His ancestors helped to wrest his native city from the hands of the Moors. He was of the same stock as Saint Vincent Ferrer, another Friar Preacher, and one

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[6]Father Davila y Padilla gives a brief sketch of Brother John de Mena on pages 355-357 of his "Historia." Father Alphonsus Franco y Ortega's list of holy men is at the end of his "Historia," which is really a continuation of Davila y Padilla's work.

[1]For the sources see note 1 to sketch of Father James de la Cruz.

of the greatest wonder-workers and convert-makers the world has ever seen. Some of these facts our special writers were good enough to record. The others are gleaned from general history.

We are given to understand that, like Saint Vincent Ferrer, Father John Ferrer had the best of early training, possessed a remarkable mind and spirit of industry, and became a Friar Preacher in his tender youth. Doubtless, like Saint Vincent again, he donned the habit and made his Religious profession in the Convent of Saint Dominic, Valencia. Franco (page 558) says he belonged to the Dominican Province of Aragon, in which Valencia was included. From the beginning, he showed that he had a true vocation, edified his brethren by his practice of virtue and observance of the rule, and won their esteem by his talents as well as their love by his kindly disposition. The progress which he made in the knowledge of philosophy, theology, and the Sacred Scriptures was as rapid as his advance in holiness of life. His favorite study seems to have been the word of God, for he felt specially called to an active apostolate for the salvation of souls.

In due course of time, the industrious student was ordained a priest. It was not long after this before he became widely known for his attainments, zeal, oratory, purity of soul, and unfailing priestly deportment. His thirst to do good gave him no rest, whilst his reputation caused him to be in great demand—brought him calls for work in every direction. Withal he retained his simplicity and his love of study. Whatever spare moments he had left, his active, virile, inquisitive mind caused him to spend in poring over some book or manuscript, or in investigating some difficult problem.

A thirst for missionary toil seems to have run in the Ferrer blood. It was not long from the time of his ordination when Saint Vincent Ferrer began to journey and preach through nearly all eastern Europe. Similarly the call for missionaries among the American aborigines so touched the heart of Father John Ferrer that, with the permission of his superiors, he joined in the exodus of Friars Preacher from Spain to the New World. Just when this was, or where he first began to labor among the Indians, we can not say. Be that as it may, however, it could hardly have been long before he found his way to Mexico. There he evidently travelled extensively and evangelized many tribes of natives.

In Mexico, as he had done in Spain, Father John Ferrer soon became widely known for his energy, zeal, and holy life. All considered him truly a man of God, for whom alone he lived and

toiled. Many regarded him as a saint, and attributed to him the power of miracles and prophecy. He was deeply revered. His labors were tireless and prodigious. Father Davila y Padilla gives us to understand all this very clearly. That he does not write at greater length of the missionary we attribute to the reasons for brevity noted in the previous sketch of Brother John de Mena and to a fear that, should the volume become too large, there would not be enough paper in Mexico for its publication. As a matter of fact, when it was completed, the learned author had to take his manuscript to Spain on that very account in order to have it printed. That is why the first edition of his "Historia" appeared in Madrid, although he himself was a Mexican.

Father Ferrer continued his studious habits in America. Whereever he labored, he delved into the secrets of the language spoken by the Indians. By dint of industry, aided by a fine mind and a prodigious memory, he acquired a rare knowledge of the Mexican tongues in general. It would seem that, no doubt because of the strong contrast with his own keen, vigorous mind, he found it difficult patiently to bear with the sluggish, sedentary spirit of the aborigines. Yet his ardor for the salvation of souls not only held him at his work, but even made him happy among them.

Our Friar Preacher was a genius of a really high order. In spite of his missionary labors, he was one of the earliest white men to undertake a serious research of the archaeology of Mexico, including its architectural remains, the Aztec tongue and its linguistic stocks, the literature of the natives, and the vivid hieroglyphic recital of their history. Indeed, he composed a book on this subject. Because of the quantity of picture or hieroglyphic writing he used in his chronicles few, if any, of his contemporaries could understand them. Withal Father Ferrer kept in contact with the erudite of Spain and Rome. It was perhaps at the suggestion of some friend that he wrote to the Pope, possibly Paul III, about the work we have just mentioned. Evidently it aroused great interest at the Vatican, for Julius III, Paul's immediate successor, wrote him a letter, calling him to the Eternal City with the manuscript, and forbidding his superiors to interfere in any way with the journey. The document, as no copy of it can now be found, was evidently lost in the shipwreck or in the peregrinations previously described. Its disappearance is the greater misfortune because it was very likely the first treatise ever written on this important topic. One can scarcely escape the impression that, apart from his love of science, an influence leading

to the composition of this book was a desire to set at rest once and for all the doubt which had formerly often been expressed as to whether the American Indians were really rational beings. It may be, too, that the Holy Father wished to consult the learned missionary about the affairs of the New World, especially in regard to the aborigines.

Be that as it may, the holy man prepared at once to obey the summons of the highest authority in the Church. He left Mexico with the three men whose lives we have just sketched and Brother Mark de Mena. When taking leave of his community and his friends, we are told that he said: "Woe unto us who are starting for Spain, for neither we nor the fleet shall ever reach our destination. The greater number of us shall perish. Those of us who escape shall have to undergo the extremest afflictions, and shall all die in the end, with very few exceptions. I shall remain hidden in distant places, and shall live for some years in perfect health. But I must undertake this journey that the will of God may be accomplished."

For a few months after they left Vera Cruz the story of Father John Ferrer's life runs the same as that of his four confrères. Like them, he was saved in the shipwreck, and travelled with his disconsolate comrades in their painful peregrinations. He seems to have suffered at least no serious bodily harm up to the time the River of Palms was reached. There, it will be recalled, Fathers James de la Cruz and Hernando de Mendez received the wounds from which they died. He escaped the two Indian onslaughts on either side of that stream; administered to his dying companions, finally rejoined the remnant, and journeyed on with them until they reached a river, which they thought was the Pánuco.[2]

What happened to the Friar Preacher in the conflict on this stream, in which Brother John de Mena received a fatal wound, no one can say. Nothing further was ever heard of him.

When the results of these various catastrophes finally became known in Mexico, the realization of Father John Ferrer's prediction combined with his holiness of life and the gift of prophecy which was attributed to him to convince many that his life was spared. Although no tidings of him ever reached the Spanish colonies, it was long not uncommonly believed there that he remained with some tribe of red men in Florida, and doubtless lost

[2]For the River of Palms see note 7 to sketch of Father James de la Cruz; and for the Pánuco see sketch of Brother John de Mena and note 5 to same.

no opportunity to instill the truths of Christianity into their minds.[3] Whether he was killed or lived on for years in a lonely apostolate, as was thought especially in Mexico, will not be known with certainty until the day of the general judgment. However, it would appear that he may justly be placed in the list of those servants of God who have won the crown of glory at the price of their blood within the borders of the present United States. Franco (page 558) gives him a place of honor in his list of saintly men.

Brother Mark de Mena[1]

Not the least of this ill-fated band of Friars Preacher was Brother Mark de Mena. His biographers do not give us the date of his birth. He was born in a small town called Villar del Pedro, not far from Talavera, Spain. His father was Peter Diaz; his mother Mary de Mena. After a not uncommon custom among Spanish peoples, he went by his mother's family name. His parents were of high standing, as well as blessed with the possessions of this earth. True Christians, they brought up their son in the fear and love of God, no less than looked with care to his education. When he was sufficiently prepared for a higher course of studies, they sent him to the University of Salamanca, where, through industry and talent, he made rapid progress.

As the day of graduation from school approaches, most young men begin to lay plans for the sphere of life they hope to fill in the world. On the contrary, a vocation to the Order of Saint Dominic gained the mastery over Mark's soul, in which he had kept alive the spirit of fervor and piety instilled into him in his youth. Nor was he slow to obey the call; for he set greater store by his salvation, of which he felt surer in a religious institute, than by wealth or honor. Indeed, he gave his friends one of those surprises that were not altogether unknown in former times. Out of a profound humility, which made him dread the responsibility of the priesthood, he chose the state of a lay Brother rather than that of a cleric. His pious parents do not appear to have opposed the step, for they were only too happy to see their son

[3]Father Davila y Padilla gives a brief sketch of Father Ferrer on pages 357-358 of his "Historia."

[1]For the Sources of this sketch see note 1 to that of Father James de la Cruz. The "Historiadores" of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, publish by Father Cuervo write *ex professo* of Brother Mark de Mena, for he a son of that convent. They tell about the other four because they were h him in the wanderings of which we have written in the previous sk for

in the service of God, whatever the capacity in which he elected to serve.

Perhaps the fathers of old Saint Stephen's Convent, Salamanca, were not less surprised than Mark de Mena's friends when he asked to be received into the community as a lay Brother. They knew him as a pious young man, for he frequented their church; and they were aware of his talents and education. For this reason, they sought to induce him to change his mind and enter as a cleric. No amount of persuasion could turn him from the course on which he had resolved. He received the habit in 1544. A year later, April 29, 1545, he took the three vows of religion as a Friar Preacher. From the time he came among them, the community of Saint Stephen's saw they had a treasure in the youthful Brother—a man of God in every way, extremely useful, exemplary in all things.[2]

Possibly it was these very things that soon deprived Saint Stephen's of one of its most cherished members, for he was just the sort of man needed on the missions in Mexico. At any rate, not long after his Religious profession he was sent to that part of the New World, in company with a number of confrères, that he might aid the Fathers in their work and in the instruction of the Indians. Possibly one of his companions on the journey was Father Dominic de Salazar, who was afterwards to see service in Florida, and later to become the first Bishop of the Philippine Islands.

In his American field of labor Brother Mark de Mena made himself perhaps even more useful than he had been in his home province. Nor was he less exemplary. He won all hearts. Every kind of work was assigned to him; and never did he fail to acquit himself to the full satisfaction of those who entrusted it to him. Thus he labored on in the convents and among the Indians of Mexico until 1553. Following their usual method, which no doubt was largely due to the many things they had to tell, the Friar-Preacher writers are quite brief in their encomiums of this genuine servant of Christ. Yet they are strong and explicit in what they say. Their words imply much indeed. For instance, they place him among the best men (*muy principales ministros*)

[2]Up to this point we have followed Cuervo's historians principally, although Davila y Padilla gives some of the facts. From this place on those historians largely follow Davila y Padilla, who is the leading authority both on the episode itself and on the lives (in Mexico) of the five Friars Preacher in it.

whom Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, which did so much for the Province of Saint James, in Mexico, sent to New Spain.[3]

Father Davila y Padilla does not tell us why the zealous lay Brother started on his journey to Spain. Yet one can easily see that he was sent to the mother-country and mother-province on business for the fathers in Mexico. Indeed, his education and mentality combined with the confidence and esteem in which he was held to render him as fit for such a commission as a cleric would have been. Fathers Alphonsus Fernandez and Jerome de Quintana explicitly state that he was homeward-bound on affairs for his adopted province.[4] He sailed from Vera Cruz in the early days of April, 1553, with the ill-fated fleet of which we have told.

From this time the holy man's unspeakable experiences were the same as those of Father James de la Cruz, Father Hernando de Mendez, Brother John de Mena, Father John Ferrer, and the other shipwrecked Spaniards. With Father John Ferrer and Brother John de Mena he escaped the two Indian onslaughts at the River of Palms, and finally rejoined his comrades, and reached another river which they called, or thought was, the Pánuco.[5] Only the bravest of the brave could have kept up their courage through these sufferings and difficulties. Only the strongest of the strong could have undergone such hardships.

In the encounter on the supposed Pánuco, he was shot with seven arrows. He managed to reach the water's edge, but could go no farther. There the natives left him. The wounded man later regained consciousness, and with heroic courage drew the darts from his body. One of them had entered between the corner of the right eye and the nose.[6] The extraction of it not only caused him special pain, but also required particular care in order not to bring the eye with it, or at least not to destroy its sight.

Our brave Friar Preacher then climbed up the banks of the stream, and followed, as fast as his pains, weakness, and injuries would allow, in pursuit of his fellow countrymen, and overtook them just as they were ready to ford still another river. There he sank from exhaustion. It was with difficulty that they carried

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[3]All the Spanish writers agree on this point.

[4]Cuervo, *op. cit.*, I, 123, III, 275. Father John de Araya ("Historiadores," II, 143) seems to think that Brother Mark de Mena was returning home to stay; but in this he differs from all the other authors.

[5]For the River of Palms see note 7 to sketch of Father James de La Cruz; and for the Pánuco see note 5 to that of Brother John de Mena.

[6]"*En el lagrimal de la vista derecha.*"

him to the opposite side. Then he collapsed again, and seemed all but dead.

The harassed Spaniards were in a quandary. On the one hand, they loved Mark de Mena as a brother, and hated to leave him to his fate. On the other, they believed he had but a short time to live, were convinced that it would be useless to try to take him along with them, and feared to tarry longer in the country of the enemy. They therefore reverently buried his body in the sand, in order to protect it from vultures, but left his face uncovered that he might continue to breathe until death should free him from his sufferings. Having hastily performed this kindly act of charity, they resumed their flight. In an open space, a few miles distant, the Indians fell anew on the weakened remnant of Spaniards. This time all were slain.

Meanwhile the warmth of the sand had revived Brother Mark de Mena. He heard the savages rejoicing as they returned from their merciless victory, totally unconscious that he lay buried alive so near them. When they had passed, he worked himself out of his shallow grave, and started in the direction his unfortunate companions had gone. Within a few hours he discovered their remains mutilated and scattered in every direction. Indeed, he was sorry that he had not been with them to share in their sacrifice. Only the grace of heaven sustained the lonely wanderer as he now continued his way along the coast, weak from fever, exhaustion, and loss of blood, and covered with painful, festering wounds.

As the reader may readily imagine, the holy man's spirit of prayer, faith, and devotion stood him in good stead during this long, weary, solitary journey. It has few, if any, parallels in history. Only to God, His Blessed Mother (whose Rosary he deeply cherished), the angels, or the saints could the companionless traveller talk as he trudged painfully on and on towards the west and south, his strong mind forcing his enfeebled body to obey. He kept near the gulf in order not to lose his road. Finally he reached the Pánuco River, which he appears to have recognized at once. Quite naturally his heart rejoiced, and he redoubled his supplications that he might be speedily delivered from his cheerless, painful pilgrimage. When he arose from his knees, he descried a small boat or canoe on the opposite bank of the stream. By its side stood two men. It was a joyful sight, for he had seen or heard no human being since he had been buried in the sand and left to die.

Brother Mark de Mena gazed long and steadfastly at the two men across the broad expanse of the Pánuco. Then he became assured that they had been sent in answer to his fervent prayers. He noticed that, unlike the Indians with whom he had come into contact in his many wanderings, they wore clothes, and seemed to be without either bows or arrows. For this reason, he felt no fear. His weakened voice and the distance which separated him from them made it useless to call to them. He therefore signalled to them with his hands. They responded at once. When they came near him, though they seemed to be Indians, de Mena was impressed by their kindly, splendid appearance, as well as by the way they were dressed. Without a word, the alighted from their canoe, taking from it a large, white cloth, in which they gently wrapped the half-dead man. With the same silence and kindness they laid him in the little boat, with soft grass under his head for a pillow. The floor was also arranged for the comfort of the sick Brother. Then, having given him some bread and water, they began to row up the river towards the town, or rather village, of Tampico, some twenty miles distant, where there was a Spanish settlement.

When they reached this place, the two oarsmen pulled into the bank, lifted Brother Mark de Mena from the canoe and placed him on the ground with great tenderness, pointed in the direction he should go, and said in a low voice: "Tampico, Tampico." These were the only words spoken all the while of the providential deliverance. One can more easily imagine than portray the joy of our Friar Preacher, when, after his many woeful experiences, he found himself safe again among his own. Still wrapped in the large white sheet-cloth, for he had nothing else to wear, he made his way into the village, where he received the most cordial hospitality from the first Spaniard at whose door he knocked.

From the time they came to his assistance, the holy man felt inclined to believe that his two rescuers were angels sent from on high, as the Sacred Scriptures told him God had often done for His chosen servants in ages past. At Tampico he became firmly convinced that they were heavenly messengers, for there he learned that the Indians of those parts had no cotton of the texture or quality of that in which his benefactors had wrapped him. Under the same conviction, his host, who happened to be a government official, gave the Friar Preacher some of his own clothes, but retained the large piece of cotton cloth, which he cherished as

a treasure from the other world. Indeed, this belief spread rapidly throughout Mexico.[7]

Brother Mark was soon sent to the town of Pánuco, where there were better facilities for taking care of him. However, immediately that he gained sufficient strength to travel, he hurried on to his confrères in Mexico City. There the joy occasioned by his arrival was not only profound, but also universal, for in that section everybody knew and loved him. All regarded him as one who had been saved by a special divine providence. Although the wounds healed over on the surface, pieces of hard flint still remained buried in his flesh and gave him great pain. Several operations were necessary before the last of them was removed from his body. These tortures, in a day when there were no anesthetics and none of our modern surgical implements and appliances, were a martyrdom which he bore with the same heroic courage and patience that he had shown in his previous trials and hardships. He and Francis Vasquez, the sole survivors of the shipwrecked Spaniards, were of course the only sources from whom the history of the wanderings, sufferings, and fate of those who reached the land could be derived. Brother Mark did not hesito tell about them; and it is from him that the account given by Davila y Padilla was principally derived.

Never did the valiant soldier of Christ fully regain his health or strength. Indeed, he suffered greatly for the rest of his life. His right eye gave him particular trouble. Yet he endured these afflictions with perfect resignation to the will of God, to whom he offered them up as a sacrifice on the altar of love. Despite them, he continued to be a model of obedience, humility, devotion, observance, industry. Prior to this time, his brethren held him in high esteem because of his rare virtue; now they held him in veneration, for they considered him a saint.

All the Spanish writers we have seen give one to understand that Brother Mark de Mena's wanderings, after the shipwreck, were almost interminable. Yet they do not say definitely how long they lasted. Nor do they tell when he reached the Pánuco River, the village of Tampico, the town of Pánuco, or Mexico City. However, taking into consideration everything connected with these wanderings, we fancy they must have lasted from twelve to eighteen months. The next one and twenty years he spent at

[7]Such things have happened; and it is not at all impossible that Brother Mark de Mena should have been thus miraculously helped. Indeed, several extraordinary things are recorded in connection with this event.

Saint Dominic's Priory, in the Mexican capital, a constant object of admiration for the members of his adopted province. He was the same to the people of the city.

When Don Martin Enriquez de Almanca came to Mexico to assume the office of viceroy, he brought with him Father Bartholomew de Ledesma, who had been his confessor in Spain. This was in 1568. Father de Ledesma was an able theologian, and had gained no little distinction in Europe as a writer before coming to America. Almost immediately after his arrival in the New World he was given the first chair in theology at the University of Mexico. At the same time he became one of the advisers of the great Archbishop of the diocese, the Most Rev. Alphonsus de Montúfar, O.P. Despite his learning and the honors he held, de Ledesma at once conceived the highest esteem for Brother Mark de Mena because of his eminent virtue. Indeed, such was the love of the renowned scholar for the humble lay Brother that, when, some ten years later, he was sent to teach in the University of Lima, Peru, Father Bartholomew obtained permission to take Brother Mark with him.

Here the subject of our sketch spent the remainder of his days. In the Peruvian capital, as he had done in that of Mexico, he won the hearts of his fellow Religious by his gentleness, kind disposition, fidelity to duty, and model life. The people of Lima esteemed him no less. It was at the convent there that Father Davila y Padilla, destined later to be his biographer, came into personal contact with Brother Mark de Mena, learning to love and admire him as much as Father Bartholomew de Ledesma. Evidently, while he was in Mexico City, the humble Religious consented that a painting should be made of him being rescued by two Indians or angels. This he did either in obedience to his superiors, or out of gratitude for his deliverance from his long series of dangers and trials, for he ever firmly believed that it was through a special act of divine providence. He took the picture to Lima with him. One day, when Father Davila y Padilla asked him who was the Friar Preacher in the canoe with two angelic Indians on the painting in his room, he answered: "The Brother is he whom I keep in my cell."

Brother Mark de Mena did not long enjoy the friendship of Father Bartholomew de Ledesma in Lima. In 1581, much against his own wishes, the noted divine was obliged to return to Mexico to take charge of the See of Oaxaca, of which he was one of the

most distinguished bishops.[8] Brother Mark, no doubt because of his age and infirmities, begged to be left in Lima. Here he died in the odor of sanctity, in the year of Our Lord 1584, leaving a memory that is still cherished. At the end of his sketch of the holy man, Father Davila y Padilla, who was possibly at the side of his death-bed, declares: "Thus have I written this history; and I firmly believe it to be true."[9]

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[8]On Bishop de Ledesma see Cuervo's "Historiadores," II, 272-273. Hubert H. Bancroft also speaks highly of him ("History of Mexico," II, 675, 684, 695); but he seems to think that he was in Mexico City some years longer than he really was.

[9]Davila y Padilla's sketch of Brother Mark de Mena is on pages 358-363 of his "Historia."

FATHER PETER MARTIN (OR OF FERIA) AND COMPANIONS

FATHER MARTÍN[1]

The subject of this sketch was born in the quaint little town of Feria, in old Estremadura, southwestern Spain, and some thirty miles south by east from the episcopal City of Badajos. Even today Feria perhaps has a population of no more than three thousand souls, and is known principally for its manufacture of cloth. The writers do not give the date of his birth. His father was

[1]SOURCES: Bancroft, Hubert Howe, "History of Mexico." San Francisco, 1886, II, 594-595; Barcia, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-41; Calle, Juan Diez de la, "Memorial y Noticias Sacras y Reales del Imperio de las Indias Occidentales" (written for Philip IV in 1646, but no date or place of publication given), folio 122; Cuervo, *op. cit.*, I, 140-145, II, 101-109, III, 263-270; Cuevas, Mariano, S.J., "Historia de la Iglesia en Mexico," El Paso, 1928, I, 47; Davila, Gil Gonzales, *Teatro Eclesiastico de la Primativa Iglesia de las Indias Occidentales,* Madrid, 1649, I, pp. 195-196; Davila y Padilla, *op. cit.*, pp. 231-278, 593-597; *Documentos Ineditos*, III, 520-530, V, 447-478, XIII, 280-283; Fontana, Vincent M., O.P., *Theatrum Dominicanum,* Rome, 1666, p. 166; Franco, Alonso, O.P., *Segunda Parte de la Historia de la Provincia de Santiago de Mexico, Orden de Predicadores en la Nueva España* (from a Mss. dated 1645), Mexico City, 1900, pp. 21-39; Hernaez, Francisco Javier, S.J., *Colección de Bulas, Breves y otros Documentos Relativos a la Iglesia de America y Filipinas, Brussels,* 1879, II, 82; Lowery, *op. cit.*, pp. 355-370, 473-475, 480; "Luna Papers, The," translated and edited by Herbert Ingram Priestley, 2 vols., Deland, 1928; Quetif (James)-Echard (James), O.P., "Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum," Paris, 1721, II, 292; Remesal, *op. cit.*, 652 (but it should be paginated 672); Shea, "Indian Missions," pp. 50-52; "Church in Colonial Days," pp. 126-132, and "Ancient Florida," in Winsor, *op. cit.*, II, 256-260; Smith, Buckingham, "Colección de Varios Documentos," etc., pp. 10-13; Touron, *op. cit.*, V, 38-39, 104, VI, 333-348.

The three historians published by Father Cuervo write *ex professo* of Father Peter Martín (or of Feria), because he was a son of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, and tell of his companions *en passant.* It is principally from them that we take the story of his life in Spain. Father Davila y Padilla is the main authority for the part he spent in America. Father Franco considered his "Historia" a continuation of that of Davila y Padilla, and so he styles it the "Second Part" (*Segunda Parte*). Ordinarily he does not resketch the men sketched by his predecessor. But he makes an exception of Father Dominic de la Anunciación. For this reason, from page 21 to page 29, he tells of the missionaries with him in Florida, especially of Father Dominic de Salazar. Bancroft is quite unsatisfactory. He says there were also Franciscans in the expedition; but we could find no authority for the statement, and it is contrary to all the other writers. Touron makes Father Martín arrive in America many years earlier than he did, and overlooks his stay in Florida. We do not know by what work the French author was led into this error.

Don Gonzalo Martín; his mother Jane Fernandez. Some of the best blood of Spain ran in the veins of both of them. Yet we have nowhere seen him called Father Peter Martín, from his father; or Father Fernandez, from his mother; or Father Martín y Fernandez, by combining the patronymics of both parents—the three methods of family nomenclature found in Spanish countries. It would seem that he has come down in history only through a union of the name of his native place with that which he received in baptism; for ever and always do we find him styled Peter of Feria. This early custom of personal designation had not then completely disappeared. To make his family name better known, and yet to preserve that given him in history, we shall use both of them in this sketch, calling him Father Peter Martín sometimes, and Father Peter of Feria in other places.[2]

Father Peter Martín was blessed in many ways. Although his parents were high-born, their good, Christian lives ennobled them still more. They were also very wealthy for that day. They watched with great care over Peter's early training, whether spiritual or intellectual. At home they drilled him thoroughly in his religion. His primary education was the best that could be provided. No sooner did he become prepared than they sent him to the historic University of Salamanca. Endowed with industry, as well as with a fine mind and memory, he shone in all his studies. On the one hand, because of the power and influence of his family and his own talent, a future of honor lay before him in the secular life. On the other, the conduct of many of his fellow students not only shocked him, for he retained his spirit of piety, but also plainly showed him the dangers to the soul offered by the world. Nay, it turned his thoughts to the service of God in a religious order as the surest way of salvation.

From the University of Salamanca, therefore, the pious young man passed to the Dominican Convent of Saint Stephen, in the same city, making his profession as a Friar Preacher to the famed philosopher and theologian, Father Dominic de Soto, who was prior at the time. This was on February 5, 1545, after a strict novitiate of twelve months. From the moment he received the habit of the Order, Peter of Feria edified all by his virtues, among

[2]It will be recalled that family names, or surnames, as we now understand them, came into existence very slowly and gradually. For ages the only specific personal designation of the kind which people had was by calling them the son of so and so, or by adding the name of the country or place of their birth, or where they had spent much time, to that which they received in baptism.

which shone, perhaps with special luster, his spirit of obedience, humility, prayer, diligence, and purity of heart. His progress in the study of philosophy and the divinities was not less marked, for nothing seemed too profound or abstruse for him to grasp with ease. Other outstanding traits of his character were prudence, kindliness, and good judgment. Every one prophesied that he would soon be one of the foremost men in a province noted for its lights, both spiritual and intellectual.

Not one of the histories we have seen give the date of the earnest student's ordination. All of them, however, assure us that immediately after it the high expectations reposed in him began to be realized. He was entrusted with several responsible posts. In everything he acquitted himself with distinction. But his stay in the home province was brief. At that time, as for long afterwards, urgent and frequent were the appeals that came from the Spanish colonies in the New World for apostolic missionaries. They were not always answered, for the needs in Spain were also great. Father Peter Martín was one of those who hearkened to this call in so whole-hearted a manner that he was allowed to go. He had drunk deeply of the spirit of Saint Dominic, whose very soul was ever afire for the salvation of his fellow-man, and longed particularly for labor among the benighted heathen.

Sailing from his native land in his young priesthood, together with a number of confrères and perhaps some Franciscans, Father Peter of Feria seems to have gone directly to New Spain.[3] He may have broken the journey at Santo Domingo, or Havana; but his stay in either place could hardly have been long. No sooner did he reach Mexico City than he made the same impression on his brethren there that he had made on those in Salamanca. At once he applied himself with his accustomed energy to the study of the Indian language, with the result that he soon mastered it so well that he spoke it with ease and fluency.

Endowed with a rare gift of oratory, he often preached to the white *conquistadors,* of whom he never failed to draw large audiences. In fact, he soon received the degree of preacher general as a reward for his very distinguished labors along this line. Yet the simple, red aborigines were the object of his keenest solicitude and tenderest affection. For these he toiled in season and out of season, leaving naught undone for their spiritual welfare, or that he might remove the injustices to which they were so often subjected. They loved him as a father, implicitly trusted him in

[3]He seems to have come to America in 1551, or thereabouts.

all things, flocked to him in great numbers, for he gave himself to them in a most unstinted manner. Nor were they less charmed by his sermons than the whites. Indeed, the apostolate of preaching, for no priest in Mexico was in greater demand for this sort of work, and his other ministrations to the red man took him in every direction.

Oaxaca Province was then a center of intensive Friar-Preacher activities; nay, the Order had almost the entire charge of it. Father Peter of Feria saw no little service there, and held positions of responsibility. For the sake of the Zapotecs and Mixtecs, who inhabited those parts, he wrote a "Christian Doctrine" in the tongue of the former and more numerous tribe, which could also be understood by the latter. It was one of the early books printed in Mexico City. Not only did he himself use it with splendid effect; the other missionaries also treasured it highly, for they considered it a classic from the standpoints of language, doctrine, lucidity, and practical pedagogy. The work long served as one of the chief means of instruction for the aborigines of Oaxaca and the adjacent provinces.

Our missionary's fruitful toils in this section of Mexico were arrested when he least expected it. The priorship at Saint Dominic's, in the colonial capital, became vacant. Convinced that, young as he was, they could find no other quite so well fitted for the position, the Fathers there elected him as their superior. At first, the holy man's humility rebelled against the honor. In the end, however, obedience and the fear that further resistance might be against the will of God obliged him to accept an office which he dreaded. The wisdom of the choice was not slow to become manifest.

Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, it will be recalled, was the House of Studies for the Mexican Province. Possibly Father Peter of Feria had taught there a while after his arrival in America. Be that as it may, the record he had made as a student at Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, combined with his well known kindliness, good judgment, and spirit of observance to point him out as a man in every way fitted to be the head of such an institution. The success of his administration may be seen from the fact that traditions of his splendid government, brief at it was, continued not only in the capital city itself, but even throughout the province, for some three centuries afterwards—or until repeated revolutions and iniquitous laws finally all but destroyed the Religious Orders in Mexico.

Time and again in the course of these pages has the reader's attention been called to the valiant defense of the natural rights of the American aborigines by the Friars Preacher from the time they first landed on the shores of the New World. Whatever may be the opinion of others in the matter, it is ours that the efforts of the Spanish Dominicans in behalf of the Indians form some of the brightest pages in the history of the Order of Saint Dominic. The failure of Father Louis Cancer de Barbastro and his companions in Florida, in addition to affording the advocates of Indian slavery no little pleasure, caused them to grow more confident in the defense of their ideas, as well as stronger in their denunciation of those of the Friars Preacher.

It should also be borne in mind that for some years the northern shores of the Gulf of Mexico, or the storm-swept coasts of what was then known as Florida, had been avoided by the conquistadors as a most formidable region. The Spanish mariners knew them as a dangerous, inhospitable land, where many galleons laden with treasure had been wrecked, and where those who were fortunate enough to escape death from the waves had been ordinarily murdered by the savages. The gold and silver lost there had now begun to draw the ships of enemy nations for trade with the aborigines. Thus, in the end, many became convinced that it was of paramount importance to the Spaniards that they should take possession of those parts, or at least that they should win the friendship of the Indians, who were believed to be numerous and powerful, by their conversion to Christianity. Leading authorities, whether civil or ecclesiastical, in both the colonies and in the mother-country began to advocate the enterprise again. Among these were the Most Rev. Alphonus de Montúfar, O.P., and the Right Rev. Ferdinand Urango, respectively the Metropolitan of Mexico and the Bishop of Cuba. But the two eminent divines gave their thoughts rather to the conversion of the Floridians.[4]

From the time Philip II succeeded to the throne of Spain, on the abdication of his father, Charles V, in the fall of 1555, the settlement of Florida was urged upon him. In 1558, he sent a *cedula* or order to that effect to Don Louis de Velasco, Viceroy of Mexico, placing the affair in his hands. The Friars Preacher, whose views, as regards the treatment which should be accorded

[4] "Documentos Ineditos," III, 520-530, gives a letter of the Mexican hierarchy (gathered in council) to the Spanish sovereign. It is dated November 1, 1555, and page 526 shows the beautiful sentiments of Archbishop Alphonsus de Montúfar, O.P., about the conversion of Florida.

to the Indians, were held in high esteem by Philip and de Velasco, were selected by both as the missionaries who should accompany the enterprise. Nay, possibly in order to forestall any danger of conflict of opinions, they were to have charge of the spiritualities among the Spaniards as well as among the natives. Strict orders required that the aborigines should be brought under the yoke of Christ by example, instruction, good works, kindness, and presents. They were not to be enslaved. No force, harshness, or cruelty, no maltreatment of any kind, was to be used towards them, except in case of necessity to protect the lives of the colonists.[5]

Father Dominic de Santa Maria, Provincial of the Friar-Preachers in Mexico, was entrusted to select those of his men whom he should judge best fitted for the purpose. None but the most reliable were to be sent. Although prior of Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, at the time, Father Peter of Feria was at once chosen to be the leader of the clerical band, and appointed Vicar Provincial of Florida, being the first, as far as we know, to hold such a position within the present territory of the United States.[6] With him were associated four priests—Fathers Dominic de la Anunciación, Dominic de Salazar (later the first Bishop of the Philippine Islands), John de Mazuelas, and James (Diego) de Santo Domingo. All of them were ecclesiastics of superior attainments and irreproachable lives, who had given proof of their zeal and courage. Bartholomew Matéos, a staunch and true lay Brother, made the sixth member of the missionary force. No doubt others wished to take part in the cause, but were not needed.

So many lay persons offered themselves for the enterprise, in response to the call for volunteers which the viceroy issued in the name of the Spanish King, that all could not be accommodated. From twelve to fifteen hundred able-bodied men, each one capable of playing the rôle of a soldier in case of necessity, were accepted.

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[5]On the kindly character of the expedition see a letter of Father Peter Martín (or de Feria) to Bishop Bartholomew de Las Casas in "The Luna Papers," II, 325-329. It is dated March 3, 1559. The name of the addressee is not given, but the context unmistakably reveals his identity. The Franciscan, Augustinian, and Dominican provincials were called for a meeting to decide on the question of missionaries for the enterprises. The first two deferred to the last. (*Ibid.*, II, 259.)

[6]The term of priorship in Mexico at that time was two years. Father Martín might have been in his second term at this juncture, though it was practically an unheard of thing for a prior to have two terms of office in the same house in immediate succession. The writers say he was one of the greatest and most learned divines whom Spain sent over to Mexico.

Women and children were also taken in large numbers, for the intention was to form colonies which should be permanent homes for many of those enlisted. Among the men were eight Spaniards, who (having been stranded there by various accidents and spared by the natives) had spent some years in the Floridian country, and learned its languages. They were included that they might act as interpreters. For the same purpose, several Indians, who had been brought from Florida to Mexico, where they became Christians, were added to the expedition.[7] Meantime, thirteen vessels were made ready—stored with food, clothing, utensils for tilling the soil and erecting homes, or whatever else was deemed necessary for success. Some two hundred and forty horses were added to the cargo.

It was certainly a well-equipped enterprise. Don Tristan de Luna y Arellano, who is sometimes called Acuña, was placed at the head of it, and appointed Governor of Florida. With him were associated twelve captains, chosen in equal numbers from the infantry and the calvary then in Mexico. Meanwhile, prudent Viceroy Velasco, that he might guard against any possible mistake, sent an experienced pilot, Guido de Labazares, to examine the coast and select a port which would be safe for vessels, as well as afford a good place for a colony and a doorway to the new country. De Labazares picked out the fine harbor now known as Mobile Bay, in the southwestern part of the present State of Alabama. He gave it the name of King Philip Bay (*Bahía Filipina*) in honor of the young Spanish monarch at whose order the colonizing expedition had been organized.

On the day of their departure from Mexico City, Archbishop de Montúfar gave the missionaries a dinner at his palace. Then they marched to the cathedral, where, before imparting to them the blessing of the Church for travellers, he addressed them on the labors, privations, hardships, and dangers with which they should expect to meet in their new apostolic field. He knew that they would face them with the courage of the true soldiers of Christ that they were. The entire community of their confrères showed the keenest interest in the enterprise. The viceroy himself accompanied the colonists as far as Vera Cruz. In his final in-

[7]It will be remembered that Charles V ordered the Floridian Indians in Mexico to be liberated and sent back to their homes with Father Louis Cancer for the same purpose. That it was not done shows how difficult it was to induce holders of Indian slaves to relinquish such property. In our country it took a civil war to enfranchise the negroes in the south.

structions to them there, he exhorted them to treat the Indians with the greatest consideration, and to look to the conversion of the red man rather than to their own personal aggrandizement. It was a beautiful Christian talk. The fleet sailed from Santa Cruz on June 11, 1559. Meantime Tristan de Luna decided to try his fortune at Ochuse, the present Pensacola Bay, somewhat east of that which had been chosen by de Labazares. Blessed with fair weather, the prospective settlers took a circuitous route, and reached their port of destination on August 14, the eve of the Feast of the Assumption, in consequence of which they renamed it Santa Maria.[8]

All were highly pleased with the splendid land-locked bay, with the rivers which empty into it, with the country along the coast. Fish and fresh water could be had in abundance, while the soil did not promise an ungenerous remuneration for the tiller. Unfortunately for the enterprise, which seems to have been the case with the leaders in practically every attempt at the colonization of old Florida, until Peter Menendez de Avilés arrived on the scene, Tristan de Luna y Arellano was hardly the right man in the right place. Instead of unloading the vessels, storing the provisions in some dry spot, and beginning to lay the foundations of a settlement at once, as he should have done, he allowed his men to give themselves up to a round of pleasure. Many days were consumed in boat racing, testing the speed of the horses on the shore, and other sports. No doubt this frivolity was much against the wishes of the missionaries; but they had not the authority to enjoin the saner policy of serious work.

When the would-be colonists finally had their fill of fun, de Luna sent out two companies to explore the surrounding country in order to ascertain its character and to learn if any natives lived in the vicinity. One band, whom Father Dominic de la Anunciación accompanied, ascended a river, which we take to be certainly the Escambia, in rowboats. The other travelled overland in a different direction. Father Peter Martín (or of Feria) went with these. Both parties were to return to Pensacola Bay in three or four days. However, as they discovered practically no traces of human beings, they continued their searches, but in vain, for more than two weeks. Their provisions gave out, and it was only

[8]"The Luna Papers," II, 273-275. Father Franco, *op. cit.*, p. 22, stands alone in giving 1558 as the year of the departure. Possibly it is a clerical error caused by the fact that his mind was set on the year of the arrival of the *cedula* of Philip II. Some say that the fleet was taken out of its way by contrary winds.

after great suffering that they eventually reached their point of departure. There they found their compatriots in a state of the utmost consternation. Nay, many of them were on the verge of despair.[9]

About the time that these two companies started on their tours of inland investigation, two ships, in fulfillment of the orders of Philip II and Don Louis de Velasco, were made ready to continue their voyage to Spain. A glorious report of the splendid and ample harbor, together with the promises of the undertaking, was prepared for the mother-country that new colonists might be drawn thence. More missionaries, it was now also thought, would be necessary. To obtain these either Father John de Mazuelas or Father James de Santo Domingo and Brother Bartholomew Matéos were chosen to accompany the delegation to be sent to the home land. Meanwhile, a galleon had gone back to take the good news to Mexico, and to ask for further supplies.[10]

Evidently there was no thought of failure. All those bound for Europe, it would seem, were aboard the two galleons, awaiting for the word to start. Suddenly, on September 20, a storm swept the coast with cyclonic force. The cables of the anchors which held the ships were broken.[11] A large part of the fleet was destroyed; the rest badly crippled. Brother Bartholomew Matéos was drowned, together with many of his companions. The most of the stock of food, which would have sufficed the settlers for more than a twelvemonth, and other supplies were lost in the

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[9]The soldiers with whom Father Martín travelled seized a few trustful Indians (apparently fishermen), whom they wished to take to de Luna; but the Friar Preacher demanded that they should be set at liberty. Thus early did the missionaries in the enterprise begin to shield the natives. See "The Luna Papers," I, 65, 105, and II, 275. No doubt this kind of protection frequently saved the aborigines more than once during the expedition.

[10]Louis de Velasco to Philip II, September 24, 1559—in Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-13; same to de Luna, October 25, 1559—in "The Luna Papers," I, 57 ff; see also *ibid.*, II, 287.

[11]Davila y Padilla's history (p. 236) reads "on August 20," but the context shows that August is a clerical or typographical error for September. In a letter of date September 24, 1559, to Philip II ("Documentos Ineditos," XIII, 580-583), de Luna says the storm arose in the night of September 19, and continued for twenty-four hours. So there is really no discrepancy between him and the Friar Preacher. One is surprised to see Priestley twice following the evident error of Davila y Padilla (August 19-20), and yet referring to the letter of de Luna, which places the storm on September 19-20. (See "The Luna Papers," I, XXXVI, II, 244.) It would have been wiser for him to give more thought to such facts, and less to rather sarcastic reflections on Father Davila y Padilla, who, after all, was the principal author he was obliged to follow.

bay. Those who escaped with their lives believed that the overdue exploring parties had been massacred by the Indians.

Such was the state of turmoil, gloom, and despondency in which Fathers Martín and de la Anunciación found the colonists on their return to the port. After the storm, the waves brought some of the eatables back to the shore, although not in good condition. Practically none of the treasure was saved. But few of the trinkets and other commodities brought to gain the confidence, good-will and friendship of the natives were recovered. Fortunately, some wheaten flour remained uninjured, which, together with the wine that was rescued, the fathers religiously preserved for the holy sacrifice of the Mass. By good luck missals, chalices, altar linens, and other things necessary for that sacred function evidently were also saved.[12]

The Spaniards were now in sorry plight. They could not return to Mexico by water for want of suitable ships. The experiences of others in previous years no doubt warned them not to attempt to get back home by marches overland. Besides, they had a positive command to colonize Florida. In this dilemma, Tristan de Luna y Arellano sent one of the remaining vessels to Vera Cruz on a hurried call for new supplies, and started out another inland expedition under the Matthew (Matéo) del Sauz in search of towns and Indians. This time Father Peter of Feria stayed at Pensacola Bay with Fathers de Mazuelas and de Santo Domingo. Fathers Dominic de Salazar and Dominic de la Anunciación accompanied del Sauz. Governor de Luna should have then commenced the foundations of a colony where he was, and

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[12]The greater number of historians are of the opinion that Santa Maria Bay was that which we now call Pensacola Bay; and the description of Davila y Padilla, the classic author in the matter, seems to tally with it better than with any other bay along that coast. We follow this opinion in the present and the subsequent sketches, for it seems quite certain. Lowery, who appears undetermined in his mind (pp. 473-475), discusses the various estimates of latitude, distance, etc., given by Spanish accounts. But one should remember that at that remote day such calculations were far from exact. Priestley (I, XXXIV-XXXV) thinks as we do. "The Luna Papers," (II, 211-213, 273, 287) show that the fleet entered Mobile Bay first, and then retraced its way to Pensacola Bay. Shea, ("Church in Colonial Days," pp. 128-219, and in Windsor, *op. cit.,* II, 257) thinks de Luna first entered Pensacola Bay, and then proceeded to another somewhat more to the east (Santa Rosa). There is little reason for such an opinion. In "The Luna Papers" the place is variously called Bahía (Bay) Santa Maria Filipina; Bahía Filipina del Puerto (Port) de Santa Maria; Santa Maria de Ochuse; Polanza, etc. It is amusing to see Lowery (p. 475) apparently unaware that "sweet water" (*agua dulce*) means fresh water. The expression is common to all the Latin countries.

made sure of a foothold at that favorable port. Instead of this, he supinely awaited provisions from Mexico and the result of del Sauz' searches.[13]

The little food which the explorers could take with them was soon consumed. Yet, with Spanish-like courage and determination, they continued their way through unbroken forests, over rough country, and across marshes and streams, living on herbs, leaves, and roots. Finally they came upon a river, evidently the Alabama or the upper reaches of the Escambia, whose size led them to believe that Indians most likely lived somewhere along its banks, although they had thus far discovered no signs of human life. On they went, therefore, until they eventually found a few Indian villages, the largest of which had about eighty huts. The natives fled before them, but they were afterwards persuaded to return by assurances, through interpreters, that they would be in no wise molested. It was then learned that the principal village, which showed indications of a much greater magnitude in times past, was once a populous center, but had been destroyed by a former Spanish expedition (no doubt that of de Soto); and that only a few of the inhabitants had ventured to make it their home again.

Won by kindness and the few trinkets given to them as presents, backed by the influence of Fathers de Salazar and de la Anunciación, these aborigines soon became quite friendly. Whilst rather scant in quantity, the nutritious food which they generously shared with their visitors was a most welcomed blessing for the famished explorers, some of whom had died of hardships and starvation on the way. No sooner had the Spaniards rested a little at Nanipacna, as the larger village was called, than they began to traverse the country far and wide that they might ascertain its character and learn more about its people for the report which they knew Governor de Luna anxiously awaited at Port Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay. Their searches convinced them that the vast population supposed to inhabit the region was only imaginary.

Sixteen soldiers were then despatched back to the gulf to inform de Luna of the results of the exploration. Fear and dread had combined with an absence of several months to make those

[13]Del Sauz and his party evidently started on their northern march very soon after the disaster; but we are inclined to think that the date, September 24, given by Priestley (*op. cit.*, I, XXXVII) is rather too early. For some reason or other, de Luna seems to have been incapable of quick action all through the Floridian enterprise.

who remained at Santa Maria believe that the entire party had fallen victims to the tomahawks and arrows of the red braves. Great, therefore, was the joy caused by the arrival of the envoys with the good news that nearly all their contingent were still alive. As the few provisions, which had come from Mexico about two months after the departure of the expeditionary force to the north, were practically consumed, the adventurers on Pensacola Bay were largely dependent for life on whatever sea food they could catch along the shore. For this reason, they were anxious to proceed at once to Nanipacna, where they imagined corn, beans, and other means of subsistence could be had. At first, it would seem, the governor, who had still done nothing to lay the foundations of a colony, and whose mind had become somewhat delirious from fever, worry, hunger, and exposure, stubbornly opposed such a proposition. However, he finally yielded to the general clamor.[14]

The missionaries, under the leadership of Father Peter Martín, approved of the change. No doubt they hoped that, at Nanipacna, they would at last have an opportunity of exercising their zeal among the aborigines, for whose welfare, both spiritual and temporal, they had principally accompanied the enterprise. On Pensacola Bay they could do nothing in that way, for no Indians could be found in that part of the country.

Leaving a detachment of some sixty men at Santa Maria for the protection of the port, Don Tristan de Luna y Arellano divided the others in two parties for the journey. One of them travelled overland. The other ascended a river, either the Escambia or the Alabama—partly at least in small boats constructed for the purpose.[15] We are not told how the three clergymen journeyed on this occasion; but it is certain that neither division was without its spiritual guide. Both caravans, especially that which went inland, suffered terribly from hardships and hunger, for they

[14]"The Luna Papers," II, 289.

[15]It is not certain which of these two rivers the Spaniards ascended; but it seems more probable that they chose the more navigable, which is the Alabama. In "The Luna Papers" it is called Upiache, Upiachi, Piache, and Piachi. Shea ("Ancient Florida," in Winsor, *op. cit.*, II, 258) and Lowery (*op. cit.*, p. 362) say that when de Luna went north he left a detachment of men and negro slaves at the gulf port, and refer to Davila y Padilla and Barcia as their authorities. We found no such statement by those two historians. The only Spanish source in which we saw it is "The Luna Papers," (II, 289). There were certainly negro slaves with the Spaniards on their enterprises within the territory which now belongs to us. However, one suspects that the idea of Shea and Lowery is to palliate our former system of slavery. Yet our practice in that regard would rather suffer from a comparison with that of the Spaniards.

had no provisions to carry with them, and could find but little to eat along the way. A number died from poisonous leaves, herbs, or roots, whose deadly character they did not know. Others sank under exposure and starvation. It must have been some time in February, 1560, that the wayfarers finally reached Nanipacna.[16] All, particularly the women and children, were in sorry plight.

To the little Indian village was now given the name of Holy Cross (Santa Cruz), or Santa Cruz de Nanipacna. This change of name is but another manifestation of the true Catholic spirit of the Spanish people, which may be seen in their designation of cities, towns, and places, wherever they obtained a foothold. We may well believe that that of Holy Cross, or Santa Cruz, for the little abode of the Alabaman aborigines was suggested by the fact that the hapless explorers likened their sufferings on the journey thither to those of our Lord on the way to His death. It was a truly Christian thought.

The relief which the unfortunate hunters of a new kingdom found at Santa Cruz was of the briefest duration. The scanty supply of food, which the poor Indians had stored up merely for themselves, rapidly disappeared with the notable increase in the numbers to be fed. Doubtless the famished white men used all too little care in its consumption; whilst not a little was required for their horses. In this way, the Spaniards were soon obliged to scour the country in every direction for whatever might help to sustain life. Even acorns were pulverized and soaked in water in order to lessen their bitterness prior to eating them. They were an unpalatable sustenance enough, but the Spaniards were glad to get them.

Eventually about three hundred of the more able-bodied men, some afoot and others on horseback, were sent to find an Indian settlement called Coosa in the hope that they might obtain more food and discover a more favorable location. This exploring party left Nanipacna on Monday, April 15, 1560. The Coosa Colony was on a river of the same name—possibly in the present Coosa and adjoining countries of central Alabama. There are those who place it in the northeastern part of the state. Several

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[16]Priestley (*op. cit.*, I, XXXIX), we do not know on what authority, says they did not leave the bay until about the middle of February. Apparently he accepts literally the some "four months" which Davila y Padilla says were spent in travel and exploring the Nanipacna country before sending the messengers south. Yet he should have known that the "four months" were an indefinite estimate in accordance with the method of writing at that period.

of the Spaniards who went with the expedition in the capacity of interpreters had undoubtedly been with the enterprise of Hernando de Soto, for they had spent several years in that part of the country. They not only represented the soil as fertile, but also said the natives were numerous and kindly disposed towards the white man. Major Matthew del Sauz also headed this expedition. When he had examined the place, he was to call a meeting of his chief men and to report to de Luna their opinion as to the feasibility of setting up the standard of Spain there.

Of this exploration we shall have to tell later. Suffice it here to say that Fathers Dominic de Salazar and Dominic de la Anunciación went with it. Fathers Peter Martín, John de Mazuelas, and James de Santo Domingo remained at Nanipacna, or Santa Cruz. Several months passed in anxious expectation of word from the new adventure. In Alabama Governor de Luna showed the same lack of ability to manage that had characterized his ministration in Florida. Month succeeded month at Nanipacna. Doubtless a few huts were erected as a protection against the weather; but no effort was made to establish an organized colony. Most likely (and this is the general impression), the missionaries had a temporary chapel of bark and twigs built, for divine worship. As a matter of fact, such a provision for religion was rarely, if ever, neglected by the Spanish conquerors of America wherever they tarried for any length of time. Strange to say, although the soil around Santa Cruz de Nanipacna was not unproductive, and he spent the late winter and spring of 1560 there, Tristan de Luna y Arellano had no land cleared or planted to provide food for his famishing compatriots.[17]

A little corn discovered by the party sent to Coosa, before they had proceeded far on the way, was sent back at once to the governor. Possibly a few supplies also came from Vera Cruz to Santa Maria, and thence by way of the Escambia or the Alabama

[17]Nanipacna, or Santa Cruz de Nanipacna, was evidently somewhere in the lower part of Alabama, and on a river. Both the Escambia and the Alabama are mentioned as the stream; but it was most likely the latter. Nanipacna is the name given to the village in all the accounts previous to "The Luna Papers." Priestley insists on calling it Nanipacana for the reason that the name Nanipacna does not appear in those documents, and that Nanipacana occurs more frequently than any of the other names by which it is designated. However, we submit that the missionaries were the best educated men in the expedition; and it was certainly from them that Davila y Padilla got the name Nanipacna. Accordingly, before changing that name, one would like to see the name of the Indian village in the handwriting of some of those fathers in order to be certain that it was correctly copied in the documents printed in "The Luna Papers."

to Nanipacna (Nanipacana, or Ypacana, as it is called in "The De Luna Papers"). Nevertheless the situation there soon became worse than it had ever been on Pensacola Bay, where the people had managed to live largely on crabs, fish, and oysters caught along the shore. Not a few, especially of the women and children, perished from sheer starvation, or died from eating poisonous herbs. Dissatisfaction grew no less deep than universal. Every class, from the highest to the lowest, demanded that de Luna should take them back to the gulf port, and there either seek means to procure relief for them, or have them returned to Mexico. He resisted stubbornly; but in the end he was forced to yield to the urge to the extent of relinquishing Santa Cruz de Nanipacna and resuming the station in Florida. There, he said, they must await further orders from the Viceroy of Mexico.[18]

The three Friars Preacher gave a ready consent to this determination, for their hearts were rent by the agonies of their comrades. Besides, the Indians among whom they had sojourned were too few, too poor, and too far removed from any other tribe to offer the least hope for a missionary field. Just what, or how much, work was done among these aborigines we are not told. However, the relations with them were trustful and amicable, which must be attributed in large part to the influence of the fathers. Possibly a few infants and old people were baptized in the hour of death. Others perhaps received instruction which afterwards bore spiritual fruit under Franciscan missionaries.

Before the Spaniards left Santa Cruz, in late June or early July, 1560, they wrote a note, in which they told how they had been forced to quit the village, and where they had gone.[19] Then they buried it in a kettle under the branch of a tree, whereon they hung a placard with the words: "Dig below" (*Cava aqui debajo*). This, of course, was intended for the men who had gone to Coosa. Should they return to Nanipacna, notice the sign, and find the letter, they would learn the whereabouts of those whom they had left there. The journey back to Pensacola Bay was not less painful, laborious, and fatal than had been the one to the north.

With the means of transportation at that remote period, it would have been no easy task to supply some fifteen hundred persons in

[18]"The Luna Papers," I, 133-179, *passim*. At one time, de Luna wished to divide his forces still farther, and to proceed with a part of them to Coosa, although he had received no word from those whom he had sent thither.

[19]This date is approximated from "The Luna Papers," I, 171-179. Unfortunately, as Davila y Padilla troubled himself but little about dates, we have had to depend, as a rule, on "The Luna Papers" for them.

Florida with even the necessaries of life from Mexico. Under the circumstances which seem to have stood in the way at this precise juncture, it was all but impossible. Efforts to get help from Havana appear to have failed. Besides, although he had some communication with Louis de Velasco, de Luna evidently did not tell him his dire straits. Thus the viceroy was not fully aware of the utter destitution of the explorers. Eight days after they returned to Pensacola Bay, supplies reached the port;[20] but these were in no wise adequate to the wants.

For this reason, the demands for relief rather increased than diminished. Fathers Martin, de Mazuelas, and de Santo Domingo did not feel that the trials and hardships of their fellow-countrymen should be prolonged any further. They saw, too, that it were useless to attempt colonization without more and better provisions. Accordingly, they offered their services to go to Havana and Mexico in search of help. Compelled by the general clamor, but apparently much against his will, de Luna now sent a number of women, children, married men, and debilitated soldiers back to Mexico. Father John de Mazuelas seems to have gone in charge of these.[21] Father Peter Martín, most likely accompanied by Father James de Santo Domingo, proceeded on his errand of mercy by way of Havana. Although he believed that Fathers Dominic de La Anunciación and Dominic de Salazar had already fallen martyrs to their zeal, the vicar provincial took the precaution to see that the little wheaten flour and wine still left at Port Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay, should be preserved for them to say Mass, in case they returned alive, lest they should have none of their own.

From Havana, in accordance with his instructions, the vicar provincial hastened on to the Mexican capital. He carried a letter from Tristan de Luna to Louis de Velasco; but he was entrusted to give the viceroy a more detailed account of everything by word of mouth. The report, which was evidently the first full information of the misfortunes of the expedition to reach Mexico, spread sorrow and dismay throughout the country.[22] Per-

[20] "The Luna Papers," II, 121, 136.

[21] *Ibid.*, I, 181, 187.

[22] *Ibid.*, II, 39, 123, 137, 163. See also Davila y Padilla, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-265. "The Luna Papers" (I, 13, 111, 127) show a Father Barandalla in Florida from about June, 1560, to early in 1561. The "Padre" always used before his name is proof positive that he was not a secular priest, as Priestley (I, 259, note 8) thinks. However, the fact that Davila y Padilla does not mention him and other things strongly indicate that he was not a Friar Preacher. He was sent at his own request, and seems to have been com-

haps no one was more deeply pained by it than de Velasco. But, as neither Father Peter of Feria nor his two confrères returned to Florida, the rest of the story of this attempt at colonization is left for subsequent sketches.

At this juncture, as will be seen in the outline of his life, Father Gregory de Beteta returned post-haste from Rome that he might take part in these missionary activities. Father Martín reached Mexico in the last days of August, or the first of September, 1560. There he met the great de Beteta.[23] Very likely the wish of de Beteta to go to Florida combined with Martín's ill health to decide the Mexican provincial, Peter de la Peña, to withdraw the latter from the de Luna expedition. At any rate, during the twelve months of hardship, exposure, and famine he had spent on our shores, he had contracted a severe case of asthma, from which he suffered great pain. In fact, it frequently troubled him the rest of his life.

For this reason, the holy man was now stationed for a time at Saint Dominic's, Mexico City. He did not remain long idle. Indeed, despite the asthma, his life was as active and as much of a model as it had been prior to his terrible experiences in Florida. The Indians continued to be a special object of his affection, zeal, and solicitude. Again they flocked to him, wherever he went. He never tired of preaching and ministering to them. The Fathers of the province lost none of their love and esteem for him. Among the clergy and the faithful in general he retained an influence possessed by few.

Father Christopher de la Cruz, of blessed memory, became provincial of Mexico in September, 1562. On the expiration of this holy man's term of office, September 22, 1565, all eyes were turned

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missioned to look after the spiritualities of the detachment on Pensacola Bay while de Luna was at Nanipacna. We could learn nothing more of him.

Our readers can hardly fail to notice quite a difference between the opinion of Don Tristan de Luna y Arellano expressed in these pages and that of Priestley given in his historical introduction to "The Luna Papers." Those documents are largely litigious; and experience shows that such sources can by no means be taken at their face-value. They must be thoroughly examined from every angle. There is no question here of de Luna's character and ability, or of the conspicuous services he had previously rendered in Mexcio. Yet he had evidently arrived at an age which combined with poor or indifferent health to render him unsuited for the Floridian enterprise, where both physical and mental vigor was required. The documents themselves show this. Besides, friendship and family connections appear to have entered more into his appointment and the management of the expedition than was for its good.

[23] *Ibid.*, I, 125, 127, 129, II, 137, 163.

towards the former missionary of Florida as his successor. Indeed, he was unanimously elected on the first ballot. Yet, such was his humility, the Fathers experienced no little difficulty in inducing him to accept the responsible position. When the word of his election to the place went abroad, every one declared that a saint had succeeded a saint as the head of the province. The rejoicing was universal among all races and classes. Among themselves, his confrères declared that he exemplified the idea of the Pope who had declared that he would canonize any Friar Preacher who could be shown to have faithfully observed all the rules of his Order.

Father Martín's government as head of the Mexican Province proved no less satisfactory and beneficial than had been his priorship at Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, a few years earlier. Ceaselessly did he spur the Fathers on in their zeal for the salvation of souls. Especially was this true in regard to their work among the aborigines, to whom he seems to have felt his Order owed protection in matters both spiritual and temporal. But in all things, despite his infirmity, he himself led the way which he would have the confrères follow. He also set the example of perfect religious observance. A father to every one, he rewarded, chided, corrected, or encouraged, as the case demanded, and his unerring judgment dictated. Thus it is no wonder, so to express it, that he carried the heart of the province in the palm of his hand. His work took him in every direction; rest he neither saw nor sought. Withal, an eminent scholar himself, he showed himself as interested in the studies and education of the young men of the province as in its other activities.

Up to this time the term of provincialship in Mexico had been three years. At the intermediate chapter of January, 1567, which was held in the City of Puebla de Los Angeles, Province of Puebla, a letter was received from the Order's General, Father Vincent Giustiniani, extending it to four years. The members of the chapter readily agreed to the change; but Father Peter of Feria insisted that it should not go into effect until the next elective chapter, so that his term of office might not thus be prolonged. His wishes were respected. For this reason, and greatly to the holy man's delight, his provincialship expired on September 28, 1568, instead of running on for another twelvemonth. Father John de Cordova became his successor.

However, it would seem that the provincial chapter of 1568 elected Father Martin definitor or representative of the province

to the general chapter of the Order to be held in Rome in 1569. At least, we are told that he was sent to Spain on important business shortly after he ceased to be provincial; and Father de Remesal says he went on to the Eternal City. No doubt he took with him the historical outline of the Mexican Province which its Fathers sent to Father Vincent Giustiniani in February, that year.[24] Father de Remesal assures us again that the Master General was so pleased with the man of God that he appointed him a visitor to Mexico; but he pleaded so hard, in part on the ground that the province needed no visitor, that he was not obliged to accept the undesirable position.

Freed from this embarrassment, and the business in Spain completed in his usual thorough way, Father Peter of Feria, with the permission of the General, returned to Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, where he had entered the Order. He loved that convent, and seems to have wished to end his days there in the peace and quiet of its cloister. Doubtless, too, his asthma had its part in this determination. The superiors, won by his virtue, soon made him novice-master at Saint Stephen's. This delicate office he filled for a few years with exemplary piety, prudence, judgment, and success. The young men under him never forgot the training he gave them.

However, such a light could not long remain hidden. In 1574, at the request of King Philip II, Pope Gregory XIII appointed the brilliant divine Bishop of Chiapa.[25] It was the greatest shock of his life. He accepted the honor only under positive orders. But once he acquiesced, he lost no time in returning to his new American charge, where he set to work with his accustomed zeal and energy.

Bishop Martín was no longer a young man when placed over that portion of the Lord's vineyard which had once been under the care of the renowned protector of the Indians, Bartholomew de Las Casas. In spite of his years and perpetual suffering from asthma, the former missionary in Florida governed the Diocese of Chiapa in the spirit of a veritable apostle. As such was he universally regarded. Many and great were the benefits which

[24]This document is dated February 10, 1569, and is in "Documentos Inedditos," V, 447-478. It does not bear the name of the addressee; but it was obviously written to the Master General of the Order, who was Father Vincent Giustiniani. It has been of no little service to us in these papers. Several facts were gleaned from it for this sketch.

[25]See, besides the authorities mentioned in note 1, Eubel, Conrad, O.S.F., "Hierchia Catholica Medii Aevi," Münster, 1923; and Gams, Pius B., O.S.B., "Series Episcoporum Ecclesiae Catholicae," Ratisbon, 1873.

the faithful received from labors that knew no relaxation—from a prudence and wise judgment admired by every one. Among his virtues those which shone with special brightness in this capacity were perhaps his charity, goodness of heart, justice, humility, zeal, and the poverty of his own personal life. Whatever he received went to the Church or to the poor. All realized that he lived and toiled for God only. They could not but love him.

As they had been in Mexico, so in Chiapa the simple natives were the apple of the holy man's eye. In spite of his age, infirmities, and busy life, he made a thorough study of the language of the Chiapanecs. Then he wrote a grammar and a dictionary which were the most copious of the dialect up to that date. They long did excellent service for the education of the red man, as well as stood the missionaries in good stead. A lover of music and the ceremonies of the Church, he did not let his episcopal dignity prevent him from personally teaching these to the Indians. The clergy were required to do the same. His purpose in this was threefold—to win the hearts of the Chiapanecs (for they were fond of such things), to aid them in their devotions, and the better to instruct them in Christian doctrine. The results were marvellous. Indeed, the Friar Preacher's life is kaleidoscopic, and beautiful from whatever point it is viewed.

Bishop Martín's method of travel in his continual visitations of the diocese was on the back of a faithful burro, or diminutive donkey. Late in 1584, he left home for Mexico City to attend a provincial council to be opened there on January 20, 1585, under the Metropolitan, the Most Rev. Peter Moya y Contreras. In the mountains of the Province of Oaxaca the sturdy little animal stumbled, dashed the aged prelate to the ground, and broke one of his legs in two places. He was then taken to Oaxaca City for medical care.

The wounds which Bishop Peter of Feria received in this accident were both serious and complex. Great as was the physical pain they gave him, we are told that he possibly suffered more from the mental anguish caused by not being able to take part in the deliberations of the council convoked at Mexico City. In his zeal, he wished to lay before it certain proposals for the advancement of religion in the New World. We may judge of his thirst to do good and of the strength of his will by the fact that, from his sick-bed, he expedited a long letter of fervent exhortation and explanatory of his views to the assembled prelates. Without exception they marvelled at his courage. So were they impressed with his piety, practical wisdom, erudition, and solid doctrine.

A twelvemonth passed before Bishop Martín, with all his grit, could be taken from Oaxaca back to his diocese. At Chiapa all received him as a beloved father. He lived for two years more; but inability to go about, because of his injuries, obliged him to govern his flock from the episcopal city, or through delegates. His mind remained strong and alert. A great part of the time he spent in preparation for death. He died in 1588, mourned by all, and leaving a memory that is still cherished. Chiapa turned out *en masse* for his obsequies and for his burial in Saint Dominic's, the church of the Friars Preacher in the city.

Brother Bartholomew Matéos[1]

Amongst the means which God uses at times to draw the wayward or indifferent to His house and service, apparently almost in spite of themselves, is to show them the deceitfulness and uncertainty of the things of this life. Indeed, not the least of the divine graces is the opening of one's eyes to see how poorly the world requites those who seek its favors, and how short-lived is the little measure of happiness which it bestows. It was in this way that Brother Bartholomew Matéos was turned from the dangerous path he had chosen. He might not have been really bad; yet perils encompassed him on every side.[2]

Verily, Bartholomew's conversion recalls many places of the Holy Scriptures which show the mysterious workings of grace on the soul of man, no less than the freedom of the divine election. For instance, Saint John (III, 8) says: "The Spirit breatheth where He will." The Prophet Malachias (1, 2, 3) makes our Lord say: "I have loved Jacob, but have hated Esau." Touching on the same topic (Romans, IX, 13-16), Saint Paul tells us: "As it is written: *Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated*.... For He [God] sayeth to Moses [Exodus, XXXIII, 19]: *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy.* So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." A little earlier in the same epistle (Romans, VIII, 29-30) the Apostle of the Gentiles assures us: "Whom He [God] foreknew, He also

[1]Sources: Bancroft; Barcia; Cuevo; Franco; Lowery; "Luna Papers, The"; and Shea—all as in sketch of Peter Martín. See also Davila y Padilla, *op. cit.*, 231-241.

[2]The reader need not be told that not every soldier by any means is a bad man. Yet the profession has many dangers to the soul. Bartholomew Matéos was encompassed by them.

predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born amongst many brethren. And whom He predestined, them He also called. And whom He called, them He also justified. And whom He justified, them He also glorified." To the Philippians (II, 13) he writes: "It is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish, according to *His* good will."

All the above surely appears to have been verified in Brother Bartholomew Matéos. No writer whom we have seen tells where or when he was born. Yet there can be little, if any, doubt that Spain, not America, was his native country. Most likely he was a few years younger than Gonzalo Pizarro, the date of whose birth is said to have been 1505 or 1506. Of Bartholomew's youth and early career nothing positive seems to be known—not even the names of his parents. However, the indications are that his education was not altogether neglected. Certainly he was a man of strong character and good intellectual parts. No doubt, like thousands upon thousands of his fellow-countrymen, the lure of the vast wealth to be obtained on this side of the Atlantic Ocean brought him to the New World.

Just where the ambitious young man first tried his fortune in Spanish America we do not know. But little time could have passed after his arrival until he found himself in the swirl of events in opulent Peru. Possibly he had been a soldier in his native land, for that was the profession into which he drifted in the New World. We have found no record of his having taken any part in the conquest of Peru by the four famous Pizarro brothers, Francis, Hernando, John, and Gonzalo, which perhaps had occurred before his arrival there. Whether he sided with the Pizarros in the subsequent contest between them and the two James (Diego) Almagros, father and son, we can not say. These strifes long caused no end of trouble for the colonists of Peru, leading to the death of the elder Almagro in 1538, to that of Francis Pizarro in 1541, and to that of the younger Almagro in 1542. They were unhappy days for the conquerors.[3]

[3]The Pizarros and a number of the other Spanish conquerors were no doubt cruel and bad enough. Yet, in judging them, one must not lose sight of the circumstances in which they were placed. Everything considered, they will compare not unfavorably with the early settlers of the United States. The representations of them (the conquistadors) by William Pickering Prescott, Hubert Howe Bancroft, and other writers of the same kind, who could see little good in anything Spanish or Catholic, must be taken with a liberal allowance of salt.

Be this as it may, it is certain that Bartholomew Matéos served as an artillery man under the daring Gonzalo Pizarro in the latter's protracted revolt against three representatives of the King of Spain, Vaca de Castro (Viceroy from 1541 to 1544), Blasco Nuñez Vela (Viceroy from 1544 until his death in 1546), and the consummate diplomat, the Right Rev. Peter de la Gasca, who arrived with plenipotentiary powers in July, 1546. It did not take this clever, skillful nuncio of Charles V long to win the greater number of the leaders in the revolt to the side of loyalty. But Gonzalo Pizarro, the chief one, refused to submit. Brave Bartholomew Matéos remained true to the fearless commander under whom he had fought so long. Pizarro was defeated in battle, captured, and executed, near Cuzco, the old capital of the Incas, Peru, in April, 1548. This put an end to a turbulent period in Peruvian history.

Bartholomew Matéos was taken prisoner at the same time. That he had played a conspicuous part in the revolt, and was a man of high standing, may be seen from the fact that he was put in chains and held as a traitor. Not wishing to order his execution, as he had the power to do, de la Gasca determined to send him to Spain for trial.[4] Matéos was convinced that, should he be carried to the mother-country, he would certainly be condemned to death for the crime of treason. Accordingly, for he was a man of phenomenal physical strength and great determination, he broke the shackles with which he was bound, and escaped from his guards. Fleet of foot, as well as possessed of extraordinary endurance, he gained the mountains. Then he remained in hiding, but passed from place to place until he eventually made his way to Mexico City.

As the former artilleryman, now a fugitive from justice, stole cautiously along towards the north, he reflected on the sad ending of Gonzolo Pizarro, who had been his leader, the uncertainty of life, and the transient character of all that the world has to offer. Whatever of wealth he had accumulated had passed out of his hands. Whatever of honor or glory he had acquired was lost. Perhaps his conscience smote him, perhaps he recalled the lessons of religion which he had learned from his parents, when a youth, back in old Spain. At any rate, he was sad and disconsolate. Fear pursued him, for he knew not when he might be seized and sent to Spain and tried for the crime of treason.

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[4]An ordinary prisoner would have been executed or pardoned in Peru.

Such was the state of mind in which Bartholomew Matéos reached Mexico City. Possibly he had already resolved to forsake the world, and to give himself to the service of God in some Religious Institute. Hence, for that very purpose, he received the habit of the Order of Saint Dominic, taking the vows as a lay Brother in the great convent of the Mexican capital which bore its founder's name. It is to be regretted that Father Davila y Padilla does not give us the exact dates of these two really important events in Brother Bartholomew's history. However, we know that he received the habit in 1549 or 1550, and made his Religious profession in 1550 or 1551.

The quondam military man had the good fortune to come under the guidance of saintly Father Christopher de la Cruz, who was a veritable master in the spiritual life, and long had charge of the lay Brothers at Saint Dominic's, Mexico City. Matéos' conversion was thorough. From the time he received the habit of the Friars Preacher, he set to work in earnest to make amends for the past. Giving himself entirely to his new estate, under the guidance of Father de la Cruz, he made rapid progress in the way of perfection; for God richly rewards those who are generous to Him. Between our humble lay Brother and his immediate superior there arose at once a strong bond of mutual confidence, esteem, and affection, which is not common amongst persons of their different stations even in Religious Orders. Bartholomew listened with bated breath to the instructions of Father de la Cruz that he might not lose a single point. He was just as careful to put them into practice.

From a fearless warrior under Gonzalo Pizarro the ex-outlaw changed to a brave soldier in the militia of Christ. Every one regarded him as a model Religious. In accordance with their own various dispositions, some especially admired his humility; others his fidelity to whatever duty was assigned to him; others again his gift of prayer; still others his spirit of obedience, which led him to act with military promptness—and so on, of his many virtues. Father Christopher de la Cruz in particular loved and esteemed him. Although a man of few words, and little given to praise, this spiritual guide used often to say: "Would that God was served by all as He is by Brother Bartholomew Matéos;" and "Would to God we had more lay Brothers like him." Father Davila y Padilla (page 235) writes of him: "He did not wear the habit of a choir Brother [that is, of a priest]. However, he was a man of great wisdom, as well as of prudence, for he knew how

to love and serve God with his whole heart; and that is the best kind of knowledge."

Thus had Matéos worn the habit of the Friars Preacher for nine years, advancing in perfection day by day under the guidance of holy Father Christopher de la Cruz, when the call came for missionaries to be sent to Florida. The provincial of Mexico, Father Dominic de Santa Maria, was instructed to select them. Although there were many splendid lay Brothers in the province who would have gladly given their lives to this good cause, he forthwith turned his eyes towards Brother Bartholomew Matéos as the one to be chosen to serve and aid the priests in that hard and perilous field of labor. Fathers Peter Martín (appointed vicar provincial), Dominic de la Anunciación, Dominic de Salazar, John de Mazuelas, and James de Santo Domingo, the other five picked out for the enterprise of spiritual charity, were overjoyed when they learned that he was to be one of their number. We need no further testimony of his merits.

The story of the departure of the six Friars Preacher from Mexico City, together with that of their journey thence to the present Penascola Bay, has been told in the sketch of Father Peter Martín (or of Feria). Good Brother Bartholomew Matéos, as been seen, was one of those who were drowned in the hurricane.

What matters it if the holy man had a watery grave? He left Mexico in the spirit of obedience and sacrifice. One of the last things he did before departing from Saint Dominic's Convent, in the Mexican capital, was to beg his beloved friend, saintly Father Christopher de la Cruz, to give him some written rules by which to guide his life on the missions of Florida. He longed for any work or hardship that would help to make amends for past neglect or to advance the cause of God and souls. The further journey to Spain he accepted in the same spirit of religion that had characterized his entire career as a Friar Preacher. Indeed, though safe on the shore of the Floridian peninsula, he welcomed the order to go on to the mother-country, for his going would spare a priest for service amongst the settlers and the Indians, whilst he might help to enlist still other ambassadors of Christ for the New World. Many were needed. Unknown to himself, one thing that induced the vicar provincial to send him on such an errand was the hope that his great virtue and exemplary piety would offer a strong appeal to the authorities of the Order abroad to permit more of their subjects to respond to the call from America.

Our ex-soldier's death was a severe blow to the five priests whom he left on Pensacola Bay. They loved him, as well as expected great aid from him. When, more than a year afterwards, Fathers Peter Martin, John de Mazuelas, and James de Santo Domingo carried word of the sad event to Mexico, it caused deep and universal sorrow. Among the chief mourners was Father Christopher de la Cruz. Good, kind, and tender-hearted though he was, he had never been known to weep over the demise of a confrère. But on this occasion the man of God, who, less than two years later, was to be elected from the position of master of the lay Brothers to that of provincial, shed copious tears.[5] Nay, between his sobs, he was often heard to exclaim: "Oh, Blessed Bartholomew Matéos, pray for us before God, who has taken you unto Himself." Every one compared Brother Bartholomew's death to that of Blessed Jordan of Saxony, the second Master General of the Order, and felt that, like Jordan, he had gone straight to heaven.[6] He left a memory that is held in benediction. His name adorns Father Blanco's list of holy men.

Father James (Diego) De Santo Domingo[1]

In Father James (Diego) de Santo Domingo we have another exasperating instance of the omissions to which the ecclesiastical writers of the distant past were addicted. For this reason, we can not give the names of his parents, or tell where or when he was born, or say aught about his youth, or even note the date of his entrance into the Order of Saint Dominic. Fortunately, however, we are informed that he became a Friar Preacher at Saint Dominic's Convent, Mexico City. The "de Santo Domingo" attached to his first name, no doubt, was added at this time in honor of the founder of the great religious institute. Mexico might have been the place of his birth; yet the fact that Father Augustine Davila y Padilla does not claim this honor for the colony indicates that he was a native of old Spain. He took his first steps in the Religious life under Father de la Cruz. He could scarcely have had a better guide for his spiritual formation than that man of God,

[5]Father Christopher de la Cruz succeeded Father Dominic de Santa Maria as provincial in September, 1562, and was himself succeeded by Father Peter Martín three years later.

[6]Father Davila y Padilla gives a brief sketch of Brother Bartholomew Matéos' life on pages 238-241 of his "Historia."

[1]Sources: Bancroft; Barcia; Cuervo; Davila y Padilla (except the second reference); Franco; Lowery; "Luna Papers, The"; and Shea—all as in sketch of Peter Martín. See also Cuevas, *op. cit.*, II, 491-493.

who trained many of the best members of the Province of Mexico in those early days.

Davila y Padilla's brief sketch of Father Diego assures us that, from the start, he showed himself a true religious in every way. All admired his prudence, his zeal, his observance of rule. his devotion to duty. He was much given to prayer, a friend of everything good, always aiming to advance in the way of perfection. Prompt in his obedience, the superiors ever found him ready for any work that might conduce to the benefit of souls. A deeply spiritual man himself, he sought ceaselessly to draw others to the love and service of the Divine Master. God or the things of heaven were the only topics of his conversation. Whatever the toil in which he was engaged, they were the thoughts uppermost in his mind. Strict as was the Province of Mexico, Father James de Santo Domingo stood out as a member of rare mortification.[2]

It is said that everyone, whether within the Order or without, esteemed Father de Santo Domingo highly for his virtues, labors, and ability. This is a splendid criterion whereby to judge of his character. Another is the bond of trustful friendship which existed between him and many of the most distinguished ecclesiastics of the province; and these friendships show him to have possessed various gifts in no mean degree. He was a man according to the heart of spiritual-minded Father Christopher de la Cruz. Another of his admirers was Father Peter de Pravia, one of the intellectual lights of the Mexican capital, a professor in its university, and on the advisory board of the Archbishop. Withal obedience more than once obliged de Pravia to accept the priorship at Saint Dominic's. At these times he seems to have insisted that the subject of this sketch should be his subprior, for he felt that only with the efficient aid of Father James de Santo Domingo could he continue his other duties, and at the same time manage the affairs of the convent.[3]

Nor must we overlook Father John de Alcázar. This Friar Preacher, like Saint Dominic himself, was born at the little village of Caleruega, Spain. Left an orphan in his tender youth, an uncle

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[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 649-651.

[3] Christopher de la Cruz was most likely born and ordained a priest in Spain. At any rate, he became a Friar Preacher at Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, several years after his ordination. Peter de Pravia was a Dominican and had taught with distinction in Spain before he came to Mexico. Later on, he declined the miter of Panamá, but from 1586 to 1589, the last three years of his life, he was obliged to govern the Archdiocese of Mexico, in the absence of the Metropolitan, who had been called to Spain.

adopted him and had him educated. He migrated to Mexico when a young man, but soon became a Dominican in the capital city. Possibly he had James de Santo Domingo as a fellow student in theology, and learned then to appreciate his great worth. By a combination of earnest work and phenomenal talent, de Alcázar became one of the leading scholars in the colony. The trend of his zeal led him to the active life. Within a short time he was known throughout Mexico as one of the most eloquent of preachers in Spanish, Aztec (or Mexican proper) and Zapotec. He labored in many of the missions and held various positions of responsibility. Wherever he was, he never failed to seek the assistance or the advice of Father James de Santo Domingo in whatever he undertook for the betterment of religion or the spiritual welfare of the Indians.

Such calls as these, of course, combined with his own duties, for he also had missions to attend to, imposed many journeys on good Father de Santo Domingo. Pre-eminently a religious man, much given to mortification, he always made these afoot. No persuasion could induce him to travel otherwise, unless it were impossible for him to reach his destination in that way. We found no record of him holding any office of responsibility before his return from the present United States. In view of his good judgment and the universal confidence placed in him, we are inclined to believe that his humility made him studiously avoid whatever savored of honor or dignity. We have read of some of his Mexican confrères obtaining letters from the Master General of the Order which forbade their provincials at home to oblige them to become superiors. Perhaps James de Santo Domingo took a similar precaution to protect himself. His life suggests that he might do just such a thing.

In any case, the holy man's faithful and fruitful labors, especially those among the Indians, had not escaped the notice of two others of his influential friends. When orders came from Phillip II for the colonization of Florida, together with the request that Friar-Preacher missionaries should accompany the enterprise, Father Dominic de Santa Maria, the provincial, selected him as one of the number. No doubt, too, Father Peter Martín, appointed to the position of vicar provincial of Florida, asked to have him for a companion in the new field of toil.[4]

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[4]Dominic de Santa Maria was probably born in Spain, but he became a Friar Preacher in Mexico City. This was the second time he had been provincial. For Peter Martín, or Peter of Feria, see the sketch of him. Even Hubert H. Bancroft (*op. cit.*, II, 726 and *passim*) speaks of these two men and the two mentioned in the previous note as being distinguished.

Christopher de la Cruz, Peter de Pravia, John de Alcázar, Dominic de Santa Maria, Peter Martín! To have enjoyed the sincere friendship and trustful confidence of these men, to mention no others, speaks volumes in praise of humble, zealous, self-sacrificing James de Santo Domingo. It shows that he had done his full share in upholding the glorious traditions of his Order in regard to the red man in Mexico. It explains why he was picked out for the Floridian expedition. In a letter to Philip II, written on September 30, 1558, telling what had been done by way of preparation for it, Louis de Velasco, Viceroy of New Spain, tells the Spanish monarch: "Six Religious have been named. They are [Dominicans] men chosen because of their tried lives, letters and doctrine, and of an age to be able to work among the Indians and learn their language."[5]

For Father James de Santo Domingo's labors within the present territory of the United States we refer our readers to the sketch of Father Peter Martín. The story has been told there. Whether it was de Santo Domingo, or de Mazuelas, who was chosen to go on from Pensacola Bay to Spain in search of more missionaries we are not told. It would seem that Father James always remained with the main body of the colonists while within our borders. At any rate, we found no statement to the effect that he ever accompanied an excursion of those who were sent out for discovery. He left Florida in August, 1560, possibly with the vicar provincial, and a few days later than Father John de Mazuelas, in order to obtain help for the luckless men under Tristan de Luna.[6]

Like his two reverend companions, Father James de Santo Domingo did not return to Pensacola Bay with the new expedition which Viceroy Louis de Velasco sent to Florida under Don Angel de Villafañe, who was to succeed Governor Tristan de Luna y Arellano. Possibly the faithful missionary's health was broken for the nonce by the hardships he had undergone. However, it was not long before he was in harness again laboring as strenuously as ever. His work took him in all directions. In the intermediate chapter of January, 1564, composed of the head of the province, its masters in sacred theology, priors, ex-provincials,

[5] "The Luna Papers," II, 258.

[6] See sketch of Father Peter Martín. Evidently by error, either clerical or typographical, Davila y Padilla's "Historia" (page 265) calls James, or Diego, de Santo Domingo Domingo de Santo Domingo. Some writers, not noticing this mistake, have wondered if Father Domingo de Santo Domingo made the sixth priest and seventh member of the little apostolic band.

and perhaps others, the Fathers took up the question of the appointment of a master of novices for Saint Dominic's, Mexico City. James de Santo Domingo was the unanimous choice for the place. He bowed submissively to the voice of authority. Just how long he held this position, no less delicate than responsible, we can not say; but it was perhaps not for any great length of time, for, quiet and unpretentious as he was, he preferred the active life of the ministry among the Indians. History assures us that he made a worthy successor to Father Christopher de la Cruz, who was famed throughout the colony as a director of young candidates for the Order.

From the novitiate in the Mexican capital the former Floridian missionary went back to his beloved work among the aborigines. With them he now toiled practically to the close of his days. In 1577, the Indians of Mexico were visited by a deadly pestilence. Twenty-four Friars Preacher lost their lives in it. Father James de Santo Domingo, though he was no longer a young man, seems to have been one of the Fathers who distinguished themselves by their brave and heroic services at the time. As we find him subprior of Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, in 1573,[7] it was probably from there that he performed his errands of mercy on this sad occasion.

All his religious life a deeply spiritual man, our Friar Preacher was much given to prayer, penance, and meditation. These practices he rather increased than abated with age. Ever taciturn, he spoke but little that he might have more time to commune with God. Like many saints, he shed copious tears for sins which he did not commit. He is said to have chastised himself day by day. In 1577, possibly as a result of his exertions during the epidemic, his health failed. Taken sick with a fever, at Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, which he felt would prove fatal, he calmly prepared for the end. He himself called for the last rites of the Church, received them with great devotion, and then peacefully expired. Every one regarded him as one of the elect. The discipline which he so often used to punish his body was long preserved for a relic. Father Alphonsus Franco (*op. cit.*, page 558) places Father James de Santo Domingo in his list of confrères who are known to have practised virtue to a heroic degree, and to have died holy deaths. Evidently that pious writer considered him among the saints of his province.

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[7]Cuevas, *op. cit.*, II, 491-493.

Father John de Mazuelas[1]

As with the majority of the Friar-Preacher missionaries sketched here, so is it in the case of Father John de Mazuelas. None of the authors we have seen tell of his parentage, the date or place of his birth, youth, or early education, when or where he entered the Order of Saint Dominic. The fact that Father Davila y Padilla does not claim this honor for his own native colony shows that Mazuelas was not born in Mexico, and did not become a Friar Preacher there. A similar silence on the part of the four historians of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, indicates that he was not a son of that justly famed convent.

However, we are inclined to think that Father de Mazuelas was a native of old Catholic Spain. It had then, as it has now, several Dominican provinces. So were there some half a dozen provinces either actually established or under way in its transatlantic colonies. All the former were a source of supply for the latter. Most likely, therefore, Father John Mazuelas came from one of those provinces, Spanish or American, and was a Friar Preacher when he reached Mexico.

The missionary undoubtedly had been in the land of the Aztecs long enough for his superiors and brethren there to learn, from personal observation and experience, what manner of man he was by the time the order came from King Philip II to Viceroy Louis de Velasco that Florida should be colonized, and it was decided that the Friars Preacher should be taken along for the conversion of its Indians. The selection of the evangelists for the expedition was left to their provincial, Father Dominic de Santa Maria. He then held the position for the second time. Father Louis Cancer and his companions had undertaken their disastrous enterprise on the Floridian peninsula (1549) during de Santa Maria's first term of office. He was a man of fine judgment as well as of much experience in the same kind of work, and had been the first harvester of souls to venture among the Mixtecs in the mountains of Oaxaca and Guerrero.[2]

Philip wished the work of conversion of the Indians of Florida to be carried out in accordance with the principles which

[1]Sources: Bancroft; Barcia; Cuervo; Davila y Padilla; Franco; Lowery; "Luna Papers, The"; and Shea—all as in the sketch of Peter Martín.

[2]"Documentos Ineditos," V, 465 and 468. But it should be noted that on page 465 James (Diego) is a misprint for Dominic (Domingo). See also a list of the Mexican provincials in a note on page 726 of Vol. II of Hubert H. Bancroft's "History of Mexico."

the Friars Preacher had advocated from the time they first came to the New World.[3] Thus, apart from the matter being one of great importance, there was much at stake in upholding those views; and we may take it for granted that Dominic de Santa Maria acted with the greatest deliberation in his choice of men for the purpose. Peter Martín, appointed vicar provincial, was scarcely less interested. Indeed, Davila y Padilla clearly gives us to understand that those whom de Santa Maria selected were exceptional confrères, who had seen much service in the Mexican ministry, shown the mettle of which they were made, and proved themselves true friends of the aborigines. That this was true of Father John de Mazuelas is shown by what we have now to relate.

A numerous tribe of Indians, called Huaztecs in their own language, occupied a fine tract of country in the northern part of the present State of Vera Cruz and in southern Tamaulipas. stretching westward into San Luis Potosi State. The territory was pleasant, fertile, and well supplied with water. Its villages were mostly situated on the borders of deep rivers which flowed into the Gulf of Mexico where now stands the little City of Tampico. At Chila, apparently their principal village, on the Pánuco River (now ordinarily called the Montezuma), and some five leagues from the gulf, a force of men sent by Francis Garay to defraud Hernando Cortés of some of the fruit of his conquest met death at the hands of the red braves. In fact, these aborigines offered a stout resistance to the arms of the conqueror of Mexico himself.

Once converted to the Faith, largely through the Friars Preacher, the Huaztecs became splendid Catholics. The Pánuco Mission, as it was often called from the name of a former noted cacique, was one of the earliest placed under the charge of the Fathers in Mexico. Their home was at Chila, which they made the center whence they attended the entire district. The real name of the mission was Our Lady of the Assumption (*La Asunción de Chila*). Its Indians were considered among the best in New Spain. Although he had most likely seen service in various other parts of the colony, particularly for the aboriginal inhabitants, Father John de Mazuelas seems to have spent the greater part of his time in and around Pánuco. Evidently he had attracted no little attention by his faithful and effective labors. Because of them he had become the head of the mission. For this reason, although he was superior at Chila (just as Father

[3]See letter of Father Peter Martín (or of Feria) to Bishop Bartholomew de Las Casas in "The Luna Papers," II, 324-329.

Peter Martín was in Mexico City), when the call came for missionaries to go to Florida, he was chosen to be one of the number.[4] It was an irresistible invitation to his zeal. He therefore immediately resigned his place of honor at Chila and started for the Mexican capital in order to serve under Father Martín in the unconverted North.

Louis de Velasco's regard for the Friars Preacher selected to accompany the Floridian enterprise may be judged by two of his letters to Philip II. In the first, which we have already seen (of date September 30, 1558), he writes: "Six Religious have been named. They are [Dominicans] men chosen because of their tried lives, letters, and doctrine, and of an age to be able to work among the Indians and learn their languages." In the second, written in Tlaxcala, May 25, 1559, the viceroy tells the Spanish monarch: "The Religious who go at present number six. Father Peter of Feria [Martín] goes as vicar provincial. The others are Father Dominic de la Anunciación, who wrote the letter to the Bishop of Chiapa (a copy of which your Majesty ordered me to send); Father Dominic de Salazar; Father John [de] Mazuelas; Father James de Santo Domingo; and Brother Bartholomew Matéos. They are all select Religious, and such as they should be for such an expedition."[5] We need no better testimonial of the character of the subject of this paper and his confrères than the two documents we have just quoted.

For the apstolic man's departure from Mexico City, sailing from Vera Cruz, arrival at Pensacola Bay, and sojourn in Florida the reader is referred to the sketch of Father Peter Martín (or of Feria). The story of the pious enterprise, as far as de Mazuelas is concerned, has been told there. Suffice it here to say that either he or Father James de Santo Domingo was delegated to go on to Spain for further help, but was prevented by the storm; and that both seem to have always stayed with the main body of the colonists. At least we found no mention of them on any journey except those from Pensacola Bay to Nanipacna, to which was given the name of Santa Cruz on their arrival, and thence back to the port on the gulf shore. Father de Mazuelas' labors within the present territory of the United States effected but little, if any, good, it is true, other than to afford the would-be settlers the con-

[4] Bancroft (*op. cit.*, II, 94-100, 302, and 397, note 38) touches on this mission; but he does not give an idea of the work of the fathers there.

[5] "The Luna Papers," II, 258 and 224.

solations of their religion. Yet, under the circumstances, no messenger of the Gospel could have done more.

On the return of Tristan de Luna y Arellano and his followers to the Gulf of Mexico, it will be recalled, Father John de Mazuelas went back to Mexico in charge of the married men, women, and children it had become necessary to send home. His mission, like that of Fathers Peter Martín and James de Santo Domingo, was to procure aid and relief for the Spaniards in Florida.[6] None of the three, perhaps because not permitted, returned to Pensacola Bay. This, it will also be remembered, was in August, 1560. From that time, strange to say, Father John de Mazuelas drops out of history for we find no further mention of his name.

Father Davila y Padilla ordinarily has a further word, be it ever so brief, to say about those who went from his province to labor in Florida, after their return to Mexico. That he does not do this in the case of Father John de Mazuelas indicates that he overlooked the brave Indian missionary who came to our shores. It would explain why Father Alphonsus Franco does not place Father de Mazuelas in the list of saintly Friars Preacher of Mexico at the end of his history. The names of all the other Floridian missionaries from the province are found in it.[7] The fact that he was one of the few chosen to labor in the religious part of the expedition under Tristan de Luna y Arellano combines with what we know of the early history of the Province of Mexico to convince us that the name of Father John Mazeulas belongs there also. No doubt it is imperishably written on the book of eternal life; and that, after all, is what counts. Yet it is no less a matter of regret that we have no record of him after his departure from Florida. Let us hope that, for the sake of our Catholic history, the lacuna may be eventually filled.

Father Dominic de la Anunciacion (or John de Paz)[1]

In the world the name of the subject of this sketch was John de

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[6]See sketch of Father Peter Martín. "The Luna Papers" (I, 181, II, 147 and 159), which call the subject of this paper Mazuelos, would indicate that he sailed from Nanipacna for Vera Cruz. However, we rather distrust the exactness of those documents in places; and Father Davila y Padilla says he left from Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay.

[7]Father de Mazuelas is one of the few Floridian missionaries from Mexico of whose lives Davila y Padilla does not give us a brief sketch. For Franco's list of holy Mexican Friars Preacher see pages 557-561 of his "Historia."

[1]Sources: Bancroft; Barcia; Cuervo; Davila y Padilla (except the second reference); Franco; Lowery; "Luna Papers, The"; Shea; and Smith—all as in the sketch of Peter Martín. See also Barcia, p. 165; Cuevas, *op. cit.*,

Paz. He was born in 1510, in the little town of Fuente-Obejuna, old Estremadura, Spain. His father was Hernando de Ecija. His mother's maiden name must have been de Paz, for the children went by that patronymic; and it is not altogether uncommon for the Spanish to take the mother's surname. Whilst both father and mother were of good stock, hers was possibly the nobler descent. Six boys and three girls were born to them. All of them, with one exception, seem to have followed the good Christian examples set them by their parents, who were splendid Catholics. The two youngest boys, Hernando and John, became distinguished Friars Preacher in Mexico, where religion reaped untold benefits from their zeal, labors, and saintly lives.[2]

Little John de Paz made rapid strides in his studies, and early showed signs of more than ordinary piety. One of the places which he loved to visit was the church of the Franciscan Fathers, the only Religious Order in his native town. At the age of thirteen years he begged humbly and earnestly to be admitted into their Order, but the superior of the monastery put him off, because of his extreme youth, intending to receive him later.

Meanwhile the father, Hernando de Ecija, died. Then came a decision of his eldest brother, Alphonsus (Alonso) de Paz, which apparently turned the pious youth's thoughts into wholly different channels, and led him far from home. Smitten with the fever of romance and thirst for gold, then widespread throughout the Iberian Peninsula, Alphonsus determined to go to the New World in search of a fortune. He filled John's mind with the same notion, and persuaded his mother to allow the boy to accompany him. The two brothers left Spain in a vessel which brought four high officials to their posts of honor in America. This was in 1528, when John de Paz was eighteen years of age.

Possibly the acquaintances and friendships which Alphonsus made on the journey combined with his ability, education, and energy to open the way to prosperity for him, and he not only amassed a fortune, but also became one of the influential men in Mexico City, where he and John settled. As often happens, even

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II, 408-409; Davila y Padilla, pp. 744-777; Fernandez, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-108; Franco, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-42; Ojea, Hernando, O.P., "Tercero Libro de la Historia Religiosa de la Provincia de Mexico de la Orden de Santo Domingo" (from an early seventeenth century Mss.), Mexico, 1897, by El Museo Nacional de Mexico, p. 12; Quetif-Echard, *op. cit.*, 302; Ternaux-Compans, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-153; Touron, *op. cit.*, VI, 238-241, VII, 103-135.

[2]Father Hernando de Paz (or de Ecija) became a secular priest in Spain, but went on the Mexican missions soon after his ordination, and there entered the Order of Saint Dominic.

with those who have been reared with the greatest care, when the goods of this world are acquired too easily, Alphonsus forgot the Christian principles which had been drilled into him by his parents in his youth at home. He became a gambler and lost his wealth and good name. Happily, through the prayers and efforts of John, who had become a Religious, he was finally induced to give up his evil ways and to resume his former exemplary Catholic life.

John de Paz, though among strangers feverish for gold, ever kept in mind the lessons he had learned in his earlier years. The effect which he soon saw riches begin to have on his eldest brother made him recoil from them; nay, it turned his thoughts again to the monastery, and he resolved to give himself to God in a Religious Order. Ever afterwards he attributed his vocation to the prayers of a beloved mother, whose virtues he never tired recounting. This time he betook himself to Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, where he received the habit of the Friar-Preachers, early in 1531, from the hands of Father Francis de San Miguel, who was prior at the time. In Religion he took the name of Dominic de la Anunciación out of devotion to the Institute's founder and the Blessed Virgin.

Saint Dominic's Convent was then in a period of sore trial. The Fathers in Mexico considered themselves under Salamanca, or the Province of Spain, from which their mission was founded. But the Province of the Holy Cross, lately erected in Hispaniola, claimed that the land of the Aztecs belonged to its territory, and sent superiors to take charge of the institution in the Mexican capital. The controversy gave rise to considerable trouble, with the result that many of the novices left. However, Brother Dominic de la Anunciación was one of those who treasured their vocations too highly to allow this to turn them away from their divine calling. On March 23, 1532, he became a full-fledged Friar Preacher, taking the solemn vows of Religion.[3]

During the twelvemonth of his novitiate Brother Dominic laid broad and deep the foundations of the virtues which shone so

[3]Fortunately, the trouble was of short duration; and it had but little, if any, effect on the apostolic work of the fathers. We take the date of the profession of Father Dominic de la Anunciación from Franco (page 13). Davila y Padilla (page 748) simply says he was professed in 1531, by which he most likely means that he entered the Order (or received the habit) in that year. Cuevas (I, 219) makes Father Francis de San Miguel arrive in Mexico in October, 1531. If this be correct, Franco is in error, when he says that de la Anunciación received the habit from him.

brightly throughout his long priestly career. At the same time he no doubt began those serious studies which were to make him one of the spiritual and intellectual lights of Mexico. However, they were carried on under no little difficulties, for the small number of students at this juncture rendered it necessary that each should do considerable manual labor in and around the big monastery, which seems to have been in the course of construction. No one gave a more willing hand to these tasks than John de Paz. Because of the demand for priests on the missions, Doctor Blase de Bustamente, a noted jurist and a man of great learning, as well as a devoted friend of the community, did a large part of its professorial work. Under his guidance the subject of our narrative conscientiously devoted his extraordinary talent to preparing himsef for the life that lay before him.[4]

Undoubtedly because of the need for missionaries, Brother Dominic de la Anunciación's course of studies appears to have been somewhat curtailed. Yet, with his gifts and application, he gathered a splendid store of knowledge. Circumstances indicate that the date of his ordination was in the summer or early fall of 1534. Julian Garcés, O.P., whose diocese, Tlaxcala (or Puebla de los Angeles), included Vera Cruz, was the only Bishop in Mexico at the time. Accordingly, for the convenience of his episcopal confrère, he went from the Mexican capital to that city (Vera Cruz) to be raised to the priesthood. He made the entire journey of some two hundred miles afoot. After the sacred ceremony, he travelled in the same way to an Indian village called Tepetlaoxtoc to say his first Mass. As every Catholic knows, a young clergyman always has another of experience to assist him on that occasion. Father de Paz' *patronus* was the venerable Father Vincent de Las Casas, the earliest Friar Preacher to make his Religious profession in Mexico.[5]

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[4]Davila y Padilla bestows the highest praise on Doctor Blase Bustamente, and says that, despite the handicaps under which they labored, some of the best men of the province were taught by him. Cuevas (II, 311-322) also lauds this educator, and gives us his first, or baptismal, name. It is likewise given on Page IV of Ojea's "Historia."

[5]Archbishop John de Zumárraga, O.F.M., was in Mexico City as bishop-elect for several years. He went to Spain in May, 1532, was consecrated in Valladolid on April 27, 1533, and reached Mexico, on his reutrn, in October, 1534. John Lopez de Zárate, O.P., the first Bishop of Antequera, Oaxaca Province, could not have been consecrated until sometime in 1535. Thus, as these two men and Garcés then constituted the entire hierarchy of New Spain, we figure the ordination of Dominic de la Anunciación as given in the text. This agrees with Davila y Padilla, who says that he was ordained in his twenty-fifth year. Father Vincent de Las Casas came to

From the time he entered the novitiate, John de Paz showed himself much given to prayer, as well as a model novice. No sooner did he become Father Dominic de la Anunciación than he began to fulfill the hopes which his confrères placed in him. Most likely it was at Tepetlaoxtoc that he commenced the gigantic labors among the Mexican aborigines which have made him famed as one of the world's great missionaries. That village seems to have been the place of his first assignment after ordination. There he apparently toiled with the veteran Vincent de Las Casas, laying the foundation for the trustful, intimate friendship that existed between the two holy men the rest of their lives.[6]

Ever and always did our Friar Preacher give himself heart and soul to work amongst the Indians entrusted to his charge. That it might be the more effective he not only mastered the various Mexican dialects by study, but also became a noted orator in them. He taught them to the young priests, who came after him, that their toils might bear quicker and more abundant fruit. He knew well that the red man liked to hear his missionaries speak his tongue fluently. In aid of the cause he wrote a Christian Doctrine and a book of sermons in Mexican, both of which were published in 1544 or 1545. They were considered classics in the language, and proved quite serviceable to the clergymen in their labors amongst the aborigines for three-quarters of a century or longer.[7]

Tepetlaoxtoc was by no means the only place that came under the spell of Father de Paz' zeal, eloquence and influence. His presence was sought in many parts. Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, and other houses here and there in smaller towns or Indian missions had him for their superior. Everywhere not merely did he give perfect satisfaction and accomplish much good; he was likewise deeply beloved, even venerated.

Not a few are disposed to consider the Spanish character stern and unbending. Father Dominic de la Anunciación was inflexible only against wrong and injustice. In all things else he was the soul of kindness and affability. Rarely were his corrections other than gentle. He smote only where the resistance of evil was

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Mexico as a simple novice, in 1526, with Fathers Thomas Ortiz, (Francis) Dominic de Betanzos, and others. Ortiz afterwards became bishop (most probably the first) of Santa Marta, Columbia. Hubert H. Bancroft is notoriously unjust to him.

[6]Tepetlaoxtoc seems to have been quite a large Indian mission at one time.

[7]Cuevas (II, 408-409) places the publication of these works in 1563; but this must have been a second edition. It would seem that another edition was printed after the author's death. (See Franco, page 16.)

strong. Then he felt that it would be unmerciful to show mercy. He sought to rule rather by example than by command. Never did he fail to lead in the way which he would have his confrères follow. Ever did he show himself a model with which no one could find fault, whether in religious observance or in zeal for the salvation of souls and the welfare of the Church. Whilst severe with himself, he was always the incarnation of goodness towards everyone else. He preferred to serve, not to be served, being never so happy as when in the ranks of his brethren. His humility invariably caused him to decline authority, unless placed under obedience to accept.

Father de Paz' zeal extended to all classes, whatever their nationality. Yet, like that of many of his confrères, it went out in a special manner to the aborigines, whom he saw subjected to so many humiliations, hardships, and injustices. The greater part of his ministry was given to these. He spared no effort in their behalf. Everywhere they clung to him as a father and protector. If he happened in a new place, his reputation soon brought them around him in great numbers. He incessantly declared that they should be treated with the greatest kindness and consideration, as well as given good example. When in authority, there was perhaps nothing for which he was quicker to give a correction than for an infringement of the rule of the province on these points.

Possibly the most notable year of his labors for the Indians of Mexico, before he went to Florida, was that of 1545, in which a frightful pestilence carried thousands upon thousands of them to the grave. During the five months the scourge raged with intensity, they died in such numbers that it was necessary to bury them in trenches dug for the purpose. To no one did they appeal for help, whether spiritual or temporal, more than to Father Dominic de la Anunciación. He multiplied himself in their behalf, devoted day, and night to the sick, dead, and dying. The epidemic left these poor people in a dreadful plight. He therefore used all his influence in order to induce Charles V to lighten the burden of their taxation until they should recuperate from their losses.

Ever and always a man of prayer, the Indian missionary seldom talked to any one, except of God and the things of God. Of these topics he never wearied; nor did he ever fail to be eloquent, or to stir the heart, when dilating on them, whether in the pulpit or in conversation. His name was known throughout Spanish America and even abroad. In the Colony of Mexico it was significant of everything that is good, holy, and priestly. He had drunk deep

of the spirit of both the Religious life and the thirst for the salvation of the souls of others which the saintly Father (Francis) Dominic de Betanzos had planted in New Spain. His confrères looked on him as another Dominic of Caleruega.

So had the apostolic man toiled ever on for a quarter of a century, when the call came from Philip II for Dominican missionaries for Florida. It is no matter for surprise, therefore, that the provincial, Father Dominic de Santa Maria, immediately turned his eyes towards him as one who should be employed in the pious project. The story of his life from this time until he and Father Dominic de Salazar left Nanipacna, or Santa Cruz, Easter Monday, April 15, 1560, in company with the expedition which Governor Tristan de Luna y Arellano sent out under Major Matthew del Sauz in search of Coosa has been told in the sketch of Father Peter Martín.[8] The Coosan Indians were apparently located in the present Coosa and adjoining counties of central Alabama. Some, however, place this colony of aborigines in the northeastern part of the state. Anyway, we are told that the exploring party travelled in a northerly direction.[9]

What led to this expedition was the account given of the Coosa settlement by a few Spaniards, who were with de Luna, and who had been lost or taken prisoners in those parts at the time of Hernando de Soto's attempt at colonization. These had spent some years in the country, which they represented as fertile, and declared that its inhabitants were numerous as well as far more kindly disposed towards the white man than any of the other Indian tribes of Florida.[10] In his sore straits, therefore, the

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[8]The words in "The Luna Papers" (I, 234), about beginning the Coosa expedition, are: *"Salimos con este intento segundo dia de Pascua de Resurrección que se contaron quince de abril deste presente año,"* which in English reads: "We set out for this purpose on the second day [Monday] of Easter Week, which fell on April 15 this year." One can hardly believe one's eyes in seeing Note 76 of Priestley ("The Luna Papers," I, 266): "The second day of the Feast of the Resurrection probably means the second day after Easter, and not the second day of Lent. In 1561 Palm Sunday fell on March 14, and Easter Sunday on March 21." Evidently his knowledge of things Catholic is very limited. A glance at a universal calendar would have shown him that Easter Sunday fell on April 14 in 1560; that Palm Sunday fell on March 30, and not on March 14, in 1561; and that Easter Sunday did not fall on March 21, but on April 6, in 1561. A little more reading would have shown him that March 22 is the earliest possible date on which Easter Sunday can fall; and that the second day of Lent can never be later than March 11.

[9]This settlement has also been located in Talladega County, which is just north of that of Coosa.

[10]Some of the Indian interpreters with the expedition were Coosans, and

governor sent some three hundred of his men to Coosa that they might investigate the feasibility of taking the entire force there, and starting the first colony at that place. The detachment of some fifty cavalrymen who went on this enterprise, of course, rode their charges; the others travelled afoot. Word was to be brought back to Nanipacna without delay, once the prospects, favorable or unfavorable, for a settlement had been ascertained.

Father Peter Martín, the vicar provincial, kept Fathers James de Santo Domingo and John de Mazuelas with himself at Santa Cruz, or Nanipcana. Fathers Dominic de la Anunciación and Dominic de Salazar were assigned to accompany the expeditionary force to Coosa, which lay towards the north. The sufferings of the explorers on this journey were almost incredible. They had no food to take with them; they found practically none on the way. Thus they were reduced to such extremities that they ate the bark and twigs of trees, grass, and whatever roots of herbs they could dig from the ground. As a last resort they cut the leather from their boots, saddles, harness, and shields, boiled it, and drank the water for sustenance. A number died from the poisonous things they ate; others from actual starvation.

Finally, after some fifty days of heroic struggle, the wanderers came upon a few Indians, apparently the first they had seen since leaving Nanipacna. These natives lived on a stream which they called the Olibahali. They fled for safety at sight of the invaders, but returned when assured by the interpreters that no harm would be done them. Here the famished Spaniards found a little corn, a few beans, and some pumpkins. Another article of food they discovered on the Olibahali was a supply of walnuts and chestnuts, with the green kernels of which they were glad to satisfy their hunger. The hardships endured by the wayfarers until their arrival on the Olibahali have few, if any, parallels even in the various early attempts of the Spaniards to colonize Florida. Here, therefore, they halted for a few days in order to recuperate their strength and to allow those who had fallen behind in search of food to rejoin the main force.[11]

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seem to have corroborated the statements of the Spanish interpreters. It will be recalled that a number of aborigines had been taken from there to Mexico by those left behind in the wanderings of Hernando de Soto. Others were possibly taken by those who returned to Mexico with Louis Moscoso de Alvarado.

[11]Davila y Padilla, who knew Dominic de la Anunciación well, says that the description which he often gave of the sufferings of the Spaniards on this journey was almost incredible. The account of it given by the Friar-

Up to this time, one of the principal difficulties of the two Fathers Dominic, de la Anunciación and de Salazar, was to sustain the courage of their comrades. The greater part of the nights the missionaries spent in prayer for the protection of heaven. The days they gave to consoling the others and exhorting them to patience by reminding them of what Our Lord had suffered for the fallen human race. Their own stout hearts helped not a little to buoy up the spirits of even the soldiers. When darkness approached, the fatigued men were summoned to prayer by the trumpet-call under the direction of the two priests. In the morning, whenever an opportunity offered itself, they both said Mass on an improvised altar under the spreading branches of a tree.

On the Olibahali the Spaniards built huts of twigs and branches of trees for themselves and the two priests had a temporary rustic chapel in which they said Mass regularly. One morning, while Father Dominic de la Anunciación performed this sacred office, a worm fell on the altar. He did not notice it until it had climbed to the rim of the chalice. Fearing lest it might be poisonous (or, worse still, tumble into the consecrated species), and hardly knowing what to do, he said a short prayer. Then the ugly thing dropped dead back on the altar. The prodigy was plainly seen by a number who were assisting at the Mass. When the holy sacrifice was over, he preached to his people, urged them to be trustful in God, and promised them that, if they were, He would deliver them from their hardships and trials, even if miracles like the one they had just witnessed were necessary.

No doubt largely through the instrumentality of the two mis-

Preacher historian himself is borne out by the documents in "The Luna Papers," as far as one could expect to see it corroborated by letters hurriedly written. Priestley seems to have been too intent on finding something against him to see this clear fact. Two letters touching on it by Matthew del Sauz, other officers, and Father de la Anunciación are in "The Luna Papers," I, 222-243. They are dated August 1, 1560, and were sent from Coosa respectively to Louis de Velasco and Tristan de Luna y Arellano. On pages 218-223 there is another from del Sauz to de Luna dated July 6, but evidently sent with the other two. A comparison of it with them reveals a two-faced, untruthful, and untrustworthy character, who would not hesitate to defame anybody for his own benefit. For more about him see "The Luna Papers," I, 266, note 78.

Some say that Olibahali means Hatchet Creek, and place it Coosa County, Alabama. Priestley (*op. cit.*, I, XL), relying on page 225, thinks the stream's name was Olibahali, and that of the Indian village Onachiqui. Davila y Padilla does not say that the walnuts and chestnuts were green, but merely that it was the season for them. However, as it was June, they could not have been ripe.

sionaries, amicable relations were preserved with the scattered Indians along the Olibahali River. Yet, and we can not blame them, the poor Indians were anxious to be rid of their unwelcome visitors, whom they feared on account of the atrocities committed in the country by others of the same race in previous years. Besides, the ravenous appetite of the famished white man made the red man fear for his little store of provisions. Indeed, a clever ruse was devised in order to speed the departure of the strangers. An Indian, plumed in his best and accompanied by six others, presented themselves to the Spaniards as a messenger from the Coosans, and said that he had been sent to invite the pale faces to their country. He insisted on acting as their guide. One night, after they had travelled a considerable distance, he disappeared. The trick was then plainly seen; but no one could, or did, take offense at it.

It was not long after this that the "land of promise" was reached. The Coosans, so called from their chief village, received the invaders with kindness. An allowance of provisions was made for both men and horses. However, the Spaniards were not a little disappointed, for Coosa itself had only some thirty huts, while five of the seven other villages were even smaller. Two were somewhat larger. The broad, open plain in which they were situated was fertile enough, but not cultivated. As the Spanish interpreters, mentioned earlier, had said, the place was once a populous center. Now it was all but deserted; for, because of a former incursion of white men, the natives had moved to others parts, possibly to the mountainous region farther north. Investigation showed that only one other small tribe, besides that on the Olibahali, was to be found in all the country. This people the Coosans called the Napochies.

Despite their chagrin, the Spaniards, exhausted by their travels and weakened from hunger, were glad to rest at Coosa. They cultivated the good-will of the Coosans, who showed every sign of friendship, as well as supplied them with food. Meanwhile the region was searched far and wide to see what prospects it might offer for a colony in accordance with the idea of Governor Tristan de Luna y Arellano, who appears to have lost all initiative. The two Friars Preacher also looked to learn the feasibility of an Indian mission in the locality.

It was not long before the conquerors discovered that the Napochies had formerly been subject to the Coosans, but had won their independence by a series of victories in conflict, and were

therefore now considered enemies. At the request of the Coosans themselves, the Spaniards agreed to help to subdue their quondam vassals. Father Domonic de la Anunciación accompanied those of his comrades who went on this warlike expedition as their chaplain. His chief motive, however, was to make a further search of the possibility of a mission among the aborigines. Father Dominic de Salazar remained with those who stayed at Coosa.

The Napochies fled so suddenly on the approach of the Coosans with their new allies that the fires were left burning in their town. Then began a pursuit which seems to have extended to the Mississippi River, where the Napochies were overtaken and compelled to sue for peace.[12] All the zeal and adroitness of Father Dominic de la Anunciación, which he did not hesitate to use through the interpreters, were required to stay the murderous hands of the victorious Coosans; for, Indian-like, they thirsted for the blood of their conquered adversaries. Indeed, it would seem that, largely through his earnest intercession, peace was restored between the two belligerent little tribes.

After the reduction of the Napochies, the Spaniards and their allies retraced their steps to Coosa. On the way they halted at the town from which the Napochies had fled. Under a new impulse of savage vengeance, some of the Coosan warriors began to burn it. Here again gentle Father Dominic de la Anunciación interfered. At his suggestion, the Spanish commander even told the Coosan cacique that he would consider such an act one of war on his white friends, for it would destroy quantities of provisions of which they stood in great need. This put an end to the reprisal, and saved a store of food for the invaders. However, the fire was not extinguished without much labor. Father Dominic de Salazar and his comrades were found well at Coosa, but not a little distressed for want of nutritious food, as the scanty supply gathered by the improvident aborigines merely for themselves was almost exhausted. Thus the action of Father Dominic de la Anunciación in saving those at the town of the Napochies proved providential for both Spaniard and Indian.

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[12]Doctor Shea thinks that the Napochies were the tribe which later became known as the Natchez. Very probably he is right. The river on which they were overtaken was called by the Indians the Oquechiton. Davila y Padilla tells us that the word means the Big Water; and that, for this reason, the Spaniards at first thought the Indians were speaking of the sea. All the historians agree that it was the Mississippi. They all use the word Oquechiton, which they get from the Friar-Preacher historian; but, strange to say, they fail to give him the credit of preserving it.

Several months had been spent in this work of search and exploration, coupled with the little war against the Napochies.[13] Large, broad acres of country had been traversed. But few aboriginal inhabitants, for whom the two Friars Preacher ever kept a keen outlook, had been discovered. No others were heard of. Little, if any, prospect had been found for either a successful Spanish colony or means of even a possible support for an isolated apostolic mission. Every one had done his duty. So from Coosa, after serious discussion, twelve strong, hearty men were despatched with Captain Christopher Ramirez y Arellano, a nephew of the governor, to carry such a report to Don Tristan at Nanipacna, or Santa Cruz. The document, as one may see, was carefully worded in order not to wound the sensitive feelings of de Luna; but those entrusted with it were relied on to give further testimony. This picked band, now that they knew the way and proceeded with haste, reached their destination in twelve days.[14]

One may imagine the disappointment, or even consternation, of these couriers when they received no response to two volleys fired in the dark from their arquebuses near Nanipacna to give notice of their coming. They fancied that their comrades had fallen victims to Indian treachery. For this reason, they retired to a hill, where they spent the night. On the morrow they could find neither native nor fellow-countryman, except a dead Spaniard hanging from a tree.[15] A careful search of the deserted village brought them to the note which, as stated in the sketch of Father Peter Martín, Tristan de Luna had suspended from a branch of another tree. On this they read: "Dig below" (*Cava aqui debajo*).

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[13]The old writers seem to have estimated time rather carelessly, counting a part of the month as a full month. For instance, if a thing commenced on May 15 and ended on July 15, they would say that it lasted three months. Only in this way can we understand how this or that expedition by the de Luna soldiers could be said to have taken as long as is given in the account. For this reason, we have been content to approximate the beginning and end of the various expeditions, without attempting to assign any precise length of time to them. However, it should be noted that whenever Davila y Padilla gives a definite date, the few extant documents show him to be correct.

[14] It is from "The Luna Papers," I, 201, 205, we learn that Captain Christopher Ramirez y Arellano, a nephew of Tristan de Luna, headed the little detachment of soldiers sent from Coosa to Nanipacna. Here we have another manifestation of the duplicity of Matthew del Sauz. Feeling that the report which he had to send would greatly displease the stubborn governor, he despatched it by de Luna's own nephew in order to shield himself.

[15]Evidently this man had been executed by de Luna. The Indians did not hang their victims.

They dug, unearthed the kettle with the letter, and learned that hunger had compelled the eight hundred would-be colonists to return to Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay. Doubtless the natives, fearful lest they should be visited again by the pale faces, had fled from the place with whatever provisions they had left.

The strong-limbed messengers now sped their way southward in order to reach Governor de Luna as soon as possible. At first, their arrival at Santa Maria was a source of universal joy, for it was feared that the entire band of those sent to Coosa had been massacred by the Indians. But the dismal report which they gave of the few natives they had encountered, the Coosans included, and of the miserable prospects for either a colony or the maintenance of missionaries in all the vast country they had traversed, threw a gloom over those who had trusted to find relief in or from Coosa.[16] The opinion that any further attempt to plant settlements in Florida would involve much suffering and sacrifice of life, without any hope of success, now became practically unanimous. Fathers Peter Martín, James de Santo Domingo, and John de Mazuelas, it will be recalled, had gone to Mexico for help.

Governor de Luna, however, proud and stubborn by nature, had resolved that his name should be handed down to posterity as the colonizer of a country in which all others had failed. Evidently, his mind was not a little deranged by hardship, exposure, starvation, and fever. Somewhat earlier he had received a letter from Philip II stressing the establishment of a colony at Saint Helena on the Atlantic Coast. On August 10 he despatched a small fleet thither under his young nephew, Martin Doz, who failed to reach his destination.[17] Now, in spite of the decidedly unfavorable, though somewhat evasive, written report brought to him from Coosa (which the couriers, doubtless by instruction, enlarged), de Luna declared that a prosperous settlement could be founded there. Nay, he even accused the messengers sent by Major del Sauz of misrepresenting the place, and charged that the rest simply wished to return to the fleshpots, pleasures, and easy life of Mexico. No argument could change him from his purpose.

It was apparently on August 26, 1560, that the men from Coosa arrived on Pensacola Bay. On August 27, de Luna, determined willy-nilly that some one hundred and twenty-five men and officers, both civil and military, should accompany him to the interior,

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[16]The letters brought from Coosa by Christopher Ramirez y Arellano and companions are those mentioned in note 11 ("The Luna Papers," I, 218-243).

[17]*Ibid.*, II, 123, 167.

published a list of those who were to go, and gave peremptory orders that they should be ready to start on September 2. To a man they protested against the decision. When their protest failed, all the officers, except Christopher Ramirez y Arellano (the governor's nephew), appealed to the Viceroy of Mexico, on the ground that the expedition would be useless, foolhardy, accompanied with much suffering and loss of life, and conducive to the service of neither God nor the king. The order remained; but on September 2, only de Luna's servants appeared to get rations for the journey. The governor then proceeded to condemn the disobedient officers to death, and to declare their property in Mexico confiscated. However, left alone, he could not have his sentences executed.[18]

During this turmoil, at the urgent request of the other officers, George Cerón Saavedra, the camp commander (*maestre de campo*), and next in authority after de Luna, despatched Captain John de Porras at the head of about five and twenty soldiers to take word post-haste to Coosa for all there, especially the priests and leading military men, to hurry to Santa Maria. One of the reasons for this action was the hope that Fathers Dominic de la Anunciación and Dominic de Salazar might be able to induce Governor de Luna to come to more sensible terms. Every one else had failed to convince him of the foolhardiness of his resolution. As the other three missionaries had sailed for Mexico, they were the only ones left to whom the officers and men could have recourse in the perilous extremity. Indeed, it was felt that they could not arrive too soon.[19]

Here we shall break the thread of our story in order to make

[18]*Ibid.*, I, 198-253, II, 1-77. All this matter is litigious. In note 113, *ibid.*, I, LV, Priestley, with a suggestion of censure, says: "Davila [y] Padilla omits all mention of the lawsuits, mutinies, and hanging of soldiers." It was not at all required of the Friar-Preacher historian to go into these things for his account. Yet he hints at them quite plainly enough to show that he knew about them, even though some of them took place when there were no missionaries present. Most likely his charity led him to pass them over, for they did not belong directly to his theme. So the little dig of Priestley is puerile as well as innocuous.

[19]Davila y Padilla (p. 268) was of the opinion that these men were sent to Coosa secretly; but "The Luna Papers" (II, 72-77) show him to have been in error on this point. However, this can be easily understood, for there were then no missionaries on Pensacola Bay, whence they were sent. He also calls the camp master (*maestre de campo*) John Cerrón, in common with several other Spanish historians whom we have seen: whilst the veteran soldier always signs himself George (Jorge) Cerón, or George Cerón Saavedra in "The Luna Papers." Possibly he had two given names, and signed himself by one, but was rather generally known by the other.

a few reflections on the religious side of the undertaking. They are all apropos, for they are suggested by Davila y Padilla's history of it. Some of the facts are even plainly stated by him. Wherever they travelled, as was the wont of the entire missionary band from the start, Dominic de la Anunciación and Dominic de Salazar had given much time to serious discussion of this aspect of the enterprise. With virtually all the lay element of it they agreed that there was little or no hope for the establishment of a self-sustaining colony of Spaniards in the country. Of course, if this could be done, the problem of christianizing the natives would be simple enough, for the same harvesters of souls could minister to both races. At least the priests stationed among the Indians would have their more fortunately situated confrères, or the government, to fall back upon in cases of need. Under the circumstances that then existed, any attempt on the part of missionaries to stay or live alone with the few distant aborigines would be not only reckless, but even almost a defiance of divine providence.

This idea was uppermost in the minds of Fathers Martín, de Santo Domingo, and de Mazuelas when they went to Cuba and Mexico from Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay. However, the fact that others were sent to take their places shows that the Fathers were determined not to give up the project until they had conclusive proof that it could not be accomplished.

In none of the places where Indians were discovered, Nanipacna (or Santa Cruz), Olibahali, and Coosa, had there been any friction between the invaders and the natives. The war with the Napochies was not really a conflict between the white man and the red man, for the Spaniards took part in it merely in order to aid the Coosans, of whom they had made good friends. Only one person, a rebel Napochian, was killed in it; and apparently it ended in harmony. If we may judge by what happened in the case of the other tribes, had the explorers come in contact with the Napochies under different conditions, in all probability we should have the same story to tell of them as of their neighbors. While the peaceful, conciliatory spirit everywhere shown by the invaders was in accordance with the orders of Philip II and the instructions of Don Louis de Velasco, Viceroy of Mexico, one can easily trace it to the influence of the Dominicans. That it was never set aside during all the expedition was immensely due to the Friar-Preacher missionaries who accompanied it. We have proof of such a fact in Father Martín's unhesitating protection of the Indians taken at the outset.

This brings us back to the unwavering opposition of the Friars Preacher to the enslavement of the American aborigines under the pretense that they could be handled in no other way. These Fathers combatted the practice everywhere. Ever and always they held that the Indian had an inalienable right to his liberty; and that he could, and should, be converted, civilized, brought into subjection, taught to labor, and made a useful citizen by kindness and instruction. What happened on this expedition combines with the success of Louis Cancer and his confrères in Tuzulutlan, or Vera Paz, to substantiate their contention, and to show that their idea was workable. It was no mere dream. Had it been followed more faithfully, we can but believe that it would have been better for all classes. Personally we perforce admire their stand. It is one of the reasons why there are today so many aborigines in Spanish America.

There can be no doubt that Father Dominic de la Anunciación went on the expedition against the Napochies that he might lessen the cruelty of both Spaniard and Coosan, as well as to learn the number of natives in those parts and to study the feasibility of apostolic work there. It was not hard for him to draw his conclusion in regard to the population of the region, or the prospects for the maintenance of lone athletes of the Faith there. It was the same as that to which he and his confrères had come in respect to the other localities they had traversed. So he informed de Salazar.

The scarcity of Indians noted as discovered throughout the account of the various explorations at this time strikes one as singular. In the face of this fact, which can not be denied, the nations mentioned in the records of earlier attempts at settlements in those parts, and the tribes that are now known to have made their home there, suggest three inferences: (1) The Spaniards and missionaries did not chance upon the more populous centers. (2) The natives, fearing a repetition of what they had experienced from the white man in the past, razed their towns and fled with their provisions before the approach of the Europeans. (3) The Indians were perhaps absent on their hunts while the invaders were in the vicinity of their abodes. All three of these things may have combined to make the aborigines appear so few.[20] Be this as it may, under the circumstances, the conclusion of the Fathers and their fellow-countrymen can not be criticized. It was certainly correct in

[20]Doctor Shea is of the same opinion.

so far as it declared that the southland did not swarm with the myriads of fierce warriors who were supposed to inhabit its forests.

Everywhere the missionaries had searched in vain for some large body of Indians, in whose territory they could live, and make it a center of activity in every direction. Fathers de la Anunciación and de Salazar would have been glad to unite the few small tribes they had found for that purpose, had it been possible. Indeed, they would willingly have remained in the land of the Coosans, with whom they had begun to establish a warm friendship, could they have seen the least probability of procuring the means of subsistence, or of perpetuating the mission. In default of this, they contented themselves with planting the seed of truth, which they hoped might help the simple people in some way, perhaps in the future, and in a better day, prepare them for reception into the Church. In view of the impossibility of staying with them then, to keep them in the Faith and give them the other sacraments, it was decided, on mature consideration, that it was neither wise nor good theology to baptize any of them in their unprepared state. Thus, as far as the records go, only one Coosan was christened. That was an old woman, who was near death and begged to receive this Christian rite. Father Dominic de la Anunciación administered it to her.[21] It pained him and de Salazar to abandon this little people, but they could not do otherwise under the circumstances.

Thus, when the messengers arrived from Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay, both priests and laymen were prepared to leave the hospitable Coosans at a moment's notice. They started at once, The Indians were genuinely sorry to see them go. Not merely did the cacique show generosity in the quantity of corn and other provisions with which he supplied them for the journey; he even accompanied them for several days. The weary travellers reached Santa Maria early in the month of November, 1560. Naturally enough, the joy of meeting their compatriots, whom they had not seen for months, was chilled by the bitter discord between Governor de Luna and the colonists, especially the officers.

After the departure of the couriers for the North, September 9 or 10, 1560, the relations between Tristan de Luna y Arellano, on the one hand, and his officers, whether civil or military, and the soldiers, on the other, seem to have become more hostile than

[21]Lowery (p. 370) is mistaken when he says Father de Salazar baptized her.

ever. Indeed, disaffection was universal as well as strong throughout the rank and file. Every one cried for relief from their sufferings, or a return to Mexico. On September 13, George Cerón, again at the urgency of the other officials, sent a small vessel to Vera Cruz with some of the weaker persons at the port. The governor was obliged to acquiesce in this. But he remained stubborn and sullen, refusing to consult with the council given him by the viceroy of Mexico. Nay, he haughtily, though inanely, proclaimed George Cerón, his other official advisers, and some of the military officers excommunicated, and declared that all who did not avoid them would be considered accomplices in their crime and tried as traitors. Of course, he was also powerless to put this ludicrous sentence into execution.[22]

Such was the situation which Fathers de la Anunciación and de Salazar found at Santa Maria, or on Pensacola Bay, when they arrived there from Coosa. They began at once to try to restore peace, order, and harmony. On the one hand, they endeavored to convince Governor de Luna that he had been too quick and severe. On the other, they sought to soften the wrath of the lower officers, and to induce them to show more respect for their commander-in-chief. When reason and persuasion failed, the missionaries had recourse to prayer. Every day Mass was offered up in their bark chapel for the settlement of the difficulties. Thence processions were made to a rude wooden cross erected on the beach. The shore resounded with litanies, rosaries, and other supplications to heaven for word and relief from Mexico, which were expected, but came not; and that heaven would soften hearts that had been steeled by enmity and disappointment. By far the greater part of the people on Pensacola Bay joined in the religious ceremonies with their whole souls, for hunger and suffering increased the while with disaffection. The governor, bitter and morose, seems to have made no further attempt to procure help.

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[22]For the time when the couriers set out from Pensacola Bay for Coosa, and the small vessel was sent to Vera Cruz, see "The Luna Papers," II, 124-129, 130-135, and *passim*. Priestley tries more than one poke at Davila y Padilla, but he takes good care to pass over de Luna's void and supercilious attempt at excommunication of Cerón and others. In "The Luna Papers," I, LVIII, note 122, we read: "Davila [y] Padilla says that Cerón not only feared no punishment for his opposition, but expected reward for preventing the deaths of many people by refusing to go to Coosa. He also averred that he would testify Luna was insane because he would not believe the testimony of three hundred witnesses." As far as we can see, this note is perfectly vacuous, except in so far as it might have shown the professor the inanity of his note 113 on page LV. "The Luna Papers" sustain Davila y Padilla's statement on this point, and thus shows his aim to tell the truth.

Week succeeded week in this state of unhappiness. Nor prayers, nor entreaties, nor arguments were of avail. Indeed, the stubborn animosity seemed to grow stronger with time. The situation was the more trying to the missionaries, for through all their wearisome marches they had never failed to unite their comrades at Mass, or even in morning and night prayers.[23] Now disunion and hatred ran riot. Christmas came, with its celebration of the birth of the King of Peace; but no peace was in sight. Lent came, and was nearly past. The fear lest many of the men under their charge should be found too willful or unworthy to make their Easter duty, the time for which in those ancient days was limited to Holy Week and Easter Week, keenly pained Fathers de la Anunciación and de Salazar.

Before the solemn Mass on Palm Sunday, March 30, 1561, de la Anunciación prepared to say it by Confession. Then he begged de Salazar to pray that God would make known to him some way to put an end to a condition which had so long been not only scandalous, but also a source of sin and hardships. When he had read the Passion, he preached a short sermon on what Our Lord had suffered for fallen man. Then he continued with the Holy Sacrifice until the Communion. Here he paused, turned towards the people, with the paten in his left hand and holding the Blessed Sacrament above it with his right, and called Don Tristan de Luna y Arellano in a clear, distinct voice. The governor, no doubt not a little bewildered, arose from his usual place of honor, and approached near the front of the altar. There he knelt again, as if to learn what the celebrant wished of him. It was a solemn moment, of which we have but few instances in history.[24]

Father Dominic de la Anunciación, still facing the astonished congregation, and still holding the paten and Blessed Sacrament in his hands, addressed de Luna again, loud enough to be heard by every one, somewhat as follows: "Do you believe that that which I hold in my unworthy hand is the body of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who came down from heaven upon the earth to redeem all men?" "I do believe," replied the governor. "Do you believe," continued the priest,

[23]This practice is noted more than once by Fathers Davila y Padilla and Franco.

[24]This action of Father Dominic de la Anunciación reminds us of that of Saint Bernard with Duke William X, in order to restore peace to the Church of Aquitaine (see "Life and Times of Saint Bernard," by Abbé Ratisbonne, ed. New York, 1855, pp. 183-185). Both ceased to act as men, and let God Himself act.

"that this same Redeemer will come down again to judge the living and the dead? That the good He will reward with eternal glory, and that the evil He will consign to everlasting punishment?" "I do," replied Don Tristan, still on his knees.

"If then," said Father de la Anunciación, "you believe all this, as every good Christian must believe, how can you allow yourself to be the cause of these many evils, sins, and excesses which we have witnessed for the past five months, because you will not be reconciled with your inferior officers, and refuse to seek a remedy for the intolerable hunger and hardships of those under your charge here? They have suffered, and still suffer, because of you. Again and again have they requested, nay, urged you to procure relief for them."

After this he proceeded to say, perhaps in even a more solemn tone: "If thus far you have refused to listen to men, now hearken to the Son of the Virgin, who speaks to you. Fear this same Son of God, who will one day judge you. In the name of Christ the Saviour, whom I hold in my unworthy hand, I admonish you; I beg you; nay, I command you, to do at once that which you have hitherto refused to do, and become reconciled with your officers. If you do this out of love for Our Lord and Saviour, I promise you, in the name of God, succor before three days. If you refuse to do it, I assure you that you will be punished by His divine hands." The holy man then proceeded with the Mass as though nothing had happened.

Here we may note that Father Dominic de la Anunciación had been accredited with the gift of miracles before he left Mexico. The same reputation followed him into Florida. One attributed to him there has already been mentioned in the case of the worm which dropped dead from the rim of the chalice, after his short prayer. Another was the multiplication of the little wheaten flour for the Mass scrupulously preserved at Port Santa Maria. Although it was used sparingly for broth in cases of severe sickness, the quantity always remained undiminished. Quite naturally this report helped to deepen the impression made by the extraordinary means adopted to restore harmony in the camp, and employed in a no less extraordinary way and time. Undoubtedly every one there felt that the beloved missionary was inspired.

Governor Tristan de Luna y Arellano was overcome. Immediately after the Mass, with tears in his eyes, he publicly begged the forgiveness of those whom he had injured or offended, and took upon himself the blame for the entire trouble. George Cerón

(the second in authority), the other officers, and the soldiers, practically all of whom had been involved with de Luna, showed themselves equally submissive to what they felt to be the command of God delivered through His ambassador. The sudden and unexpected peace made the day happy even in the midst of hunger and distress.[25]

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[25]Lowery (pp. 371-373) gives an extended translation of Davila y Padilla's account.

In his introduction to "The Luna Papers" (LXIV) Priestley says: "Anunciación first confessed himself and then the governor, in evident preparation for the dramatic reconciliation he was about to effect. Lowery has retold the story from Davila [y] Padilla, with some apology for the self-evident desire of the Dominican to portray his order as most potent in peace making." We leave the reader to draw his own conclusion about the spirit, logic, and conceit of the professor's remarks. But we must note that the assertion concerning Father de la Anunciación hearing the governor's confession at this time is made entirely of Priestley cloth. It is found nowhere else.

Prior to the above statements, although he affects to sneer at several parts of Davila y Padilla's story, Priestley simply gulps down with "evident" delight a derogatory accusation against Fathers de la Anunciación and de Salazar, and waxes eloquent over it (LXII-LXIII). The charge (*ibid.*, I, 87-91), which says they publicly flouted de Luna, ordered him from the church, and refused to let him hear Mass, is signed by one Gonzalo Suarez, whose name appears just this once in "The Luna Papers." "Evidently" he was "appointed notary" on this single occasion for a purpose; and most likely it was after John de Vargas, the ordinary notary, refused to sponsor the fiction. Those present to witness Suarez' signature were Ensign Alvaro Muños, whose name likewise appears just this once; Matthew del Sauz, a trickster, and called a thief and traitor (see note 11, "Luna Papers," I, 218-243, and 266, note 78); and Captains Alvaro Nieto and Alonso de Castilla, both of whom appear to have been friends of del Sauz. Perhaps it is unnecessary to say more. However, we may note that the ugly document refutes itself, for no priest has, or has ever had, any such authority. One of the providential things about such mean litigious documents is that, ordinarily, not much investigation is required in order to detect their untruth. Priestley fell down on the investigation.

On page LXIII the professor remarks: "The Dominican historian Davila [y] Padilla has nothing to say concerning the incident." Why should he have anything to say about it, if it never happened? There is every indication that the whole affair was afterwards concocted out of the action of de la Anunciación on Palm Sunday, March 30, 1561, for the purpose of aiding de Luna's defense of himself and covering up his own pretended excommunication of Céron and others. No doubt March 7 was given as the date in order to antedate de la Anunciación's deed and thus to make the accusation appear the more plausible.

Accepting the charge and date without question, Priestley calls the affair an "informal excommunication," and then proceeds to state (note 42, p. 263): "March 7 was Sunday, as Davila [y] Padilla says that March 14 was Palm Sunday. Thus Luna's excommunication lasted only one week ("Historia de la fundación," Lib. I, cap. LXX, p. 273 ff.)." The only trouble about these statements is that they are *all wrong*. There is no such thing in the Catholic Church as an "informal excommunication." De Luna was

The above happened on Palm Sunday, March 30, 1561. Two days later, Don Angel de Villafañe sailed into the port with provisions sent by Louis de Velasco, Viceroy of Mexico. The vessels also brought various supplies for the Friar-Preacher missionaries from their provincial. The arrival of this relief was, of course, considered a fulfillment of the promise which Father Dominic de la Anunciación had made in the solemn manner described. The people now believed that he was also endowed with the gift of prophecy. In their gratitude, much to his own discomforture, they overwhelmed him with tokens of regard, as well as shocked his humility with praise. Do what he would, he could not escape such mortification.

Fathers Peter Martín, James de Santo Domingo, and John de Mazuelas, on reaching Mexico from Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay, had urged all possible speed in forwarding help to the distressed colonists they left in Florida. However, through one delay after another, possibly unavoidable, Villafañe's arrival was fully four months later than it should have been. The sufferers on the gulf coast must have begun to think that he had been lost at sea, or that the authorities had turned a deaf ear to the appeals of the missionaries who had gone home in order to obtain succor for them.

Viceroy de Velasco sent Don de Villafañe not merely to take succor and supplies to the distressed colonists; he was also to supersede Tristan de Luna y Arellano. With the new governor, or commander-in-chief, came three more Friars Preacher to replace the three who had returned to Mexico; for it was determined to make still further efforts to convert and settle Florida, and under the spiritual direction of the same Order. The new missionaries were Father John de Contreras, the lay Brother, Matthew de la Madre de Dios, and valiant Father Gregory de Beteta. The last named, it will be recalled, had been in Florida before with

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not excommunicated, for the simple reason that the two priests had no power to excommunicate him. March 7, 1561, did not fall on Sunday, but on Friday. Palm Sunday, 1561, did not fall on March 14, but on March 30; and Father Davila y Padilla does not say that it fell on March 14. The earliest possible date that Palm Sunday can come is March 15. There is also something "spooky" about the reference in this note. In the preface of "The Luna Papers" (IX) the 1625 edition of Davila y Padilla's work is given as the one to be followed; and that is the one referred to throughout the introduction, except note 67 (p. XLI). But here the 1596 edition is referred to; for the de Luna enterprise in the 1625 edition runs pages 189-229, while in the 1596 edition it runs pages 231-278. Apparently Professor Priestley saw Davila y Padilla's noted work, not with his own eyes, but with those of his students.

Father John Garcia and the three martyrs, Louis Cancer de Barbastro, James de Peñalosa (or Tolosa), and Brother Fuentes. At this time, de Beteta had lately resigned the miter of Cartagena, in the present Republic of Colombia. But of this matter we shall tell at greater length in the sketch of the apostolic man.

Viceroy Louis de Velasco's kindly and just character has caused him to be known in history as the "Father of the Indians." Angel de Villafañe, the new Governor of Florida, was no less good and gentle. He was to give his main attention to gaining a foothold on the Atlantic seaboard in accordance with the latest instructions from Spain. However, it was evidently left to him to investigate what had been done under the previous administration, and then to follow his own judgment in the prosecution of any further attempt at colonizing western Florida. Barcia (*op. cit.*, p. 41) tells us that he held several conferences on this topic at Santa Maria. Then, leaving a small force at Pensacola Bay under a captain, and with Father Dominic de Salazar and Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios, he sailed for Saint Helena, via Havana. Fathers Dominic de la Anunciación, John de Contreras and Gregory de Beteta accompanied de Villafañe. From Cuba, as had most likely been determined beforehand, Father de la Anunciación returned to Vera Cruz, whence he proceeded to Mexico City.[26]

Because of the hardships, exposure, and famine through which he had passed, his health was much impaired when he reached home. However, he did not stay long inactive. Indeed, he was ever ready for any work assigned him. Prior to his sojourn in Florida, he had toiled in nearly every part of Mexico. Now he seems to have gone the rounds again. Everywhere, the aborig-

[26]Davila y Padilla says that Villafañe's fleet should have arrived at Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay, four months earlier than it did. If we may judge from "The Luna Papers," impossibility to get vessels and other difficulties largely caused the delay. Lowery (page 373) insinuates that Father Martín's report led to de Luna being supplanted by Villafañe. Priestley states more than once that the Friars Preacher were opposed to de Luna. Neither have any valid argument to support their case. The whole matter, it seems to us, was a plain case of incompetency on the part of Governor Tristan de Luna y Arellano, which Viceroy Louis de Velasco was slow to realize, even with the repeated complaints of the officers, both civil and military, before him. Friendship and family connections appear to have come into play again. Priestley should know that, when everybody is against the government, there is something wrong with the government, and it is time for a change. The unfortunate governor seems to have been a good man and a Christian gentleman. He became adelantado of Florida too late in life and at an unpropitious time. For further information about his antecedent and subsequent career the reader is referred to "The Luna Papers."

ines were still the special object of his paternal care and administration. More than ever the people considered him a saint, and accredited with preternatural powers. Many miracles were attributed to him, which of course deepened their veneration for him. Four times was he master of novices, but we do not know at what dates. The young men loved him. Again and again did he hold the office of superior—especially in the houses located among the Indian tribes. The Rosary was one of the devotions which he sedulously propagated. In the mountain fastnesses, where he toiled or had charge of missions, every native had his or her pair of beads, and used them.

Among the many charming traits of Father Dominic de la Anunciación was the kind, gentle consideration for sinners which he ever showed in the confessional. He felt that there, above all places, he acted as the minister of God, and should do his best to win souls to Him. This thoughtfulness brought people of every class to him in great numbers, as well as gained their hearts. The Indians flocked to him, wherever he happened to be. He never scolded them, if they had done wrong, but advised them as a father would a son, and pleaded with them not to offend Our Lord—to avoid evil for the love of Him. Several times a week, when in charge of them, he gathered them at the chapel to instruct them in their religion and to quicken them in their prayers. One of the holy man's greatest difficulties in the early part of his priestly career was to wean the natives from the love and worship of their idols, which seemed to have been inborn with them. Perhaps no other missionary of Mexico was more successful in this work, or heard the confessions of more Indians.

The call of the Divine Master was strong in His faithful servant. Like the year 1545, that of 1577, when the aborigines were visited by another epidemic, was a strenuous time for our Friar Preacher. Thousands of Indians perished in it. Four and twenty of his confrères lost their lives in attending them. Old as he was, Dominic de la Anunciación did yeoman's service for the distressed natives during the calamity. Thus on and on he toiled until well past the allotted age of three score and ten years. Despite his labors, he did not relax his own personal austerities, until obedience to the voice of authority obliged him to use more moderation. For half a century or more his only way of travel was afoot, a staff in one hand, and a breviary in the other.

Of course, like all things human, the missionary's work had to cease at last. In 1584, or 1585, he became blind, but still retained

perfect use of his mind and memory. From that time he lived at Saint Dominic's Convent, Mexico City. It was the marvel of all how he could be so cheerful and patient under his affliction. No word of complaint ever escaped him. He loved to talk of God and the things of eternity, or to have others read spiritual books to him. When not thus engaged, he gave himself to prayer, or told his confrères about the early days of the province—a favorite topic with him. It was fortunate that he and the venerable Vincent de Las Casas had written an outline of its history. Father Augustine Davila y Padilla, who was then engaged on his own great book in the same house, frequently consulted the veteran Friar Preacher. As he tells us himself, Padilla's history is based on, or rather is a development of, the manuscript compendium of the two pioneers.

Throughout his active career Father Dominic de la Anunciación had been noted for his gentleness, simplicity, and kindness. During the six years of his blindness these virtues assumed an added charm. The fire of fervor still glowed within his pure heart. Thus, unable to see, bent with age and infirmity, and obliged to use a cane, he never failed to have one of his confrères lead him to Mass and the other religious exercises. He was always in good humor. In the Lenten season of 1591 he became seriously ill, called for the last Sacraments himself, received them with tender devotion, and died in the odor of sanctity on the fourteenth day of March.

God blessed Father Dominic de la Anunciación (or John de Paz) with an unusual longevity, for he died in the eighty-first, or the eighty-second, year of his age. His was a worthy ending for an ambassador of Christ who had evangelized almost every province of his adopted country, and converted thousands to the Faith or from their evil ways by his preaching, his holy life, and his miracles. He did not fear death, for he was ever prepared for it. Often had he faced it, as well as prepared others for it. Mexico City showed every honor to his last remains. His loss was mourned throughout the colony by the people no less than by his confrères, by the Spaniards as well as by the Indians, by the wealthy and by the poor. His memory was not only long held in benediction; it has come down to our own time.

Father Dominic de Salazar[1]

Few missionaries in the world's history have had so wide or

[1]Sources: Bancroft; Barcia; Cuervo; Davila y Padilla (except the second reference); Franco; Lowery; "Luna Papers, The"; Shea; and Smith—all

varied a field of apostolic activity as Father Dominic de Salazar. He was born about 1513 at the village of La Bastida, Old Castile, and Diocese of Calahorra, northern Spain.[2] Both his father, James (Diego) Lopez de Salazar, and mother, Anna de Cariga, belonged to distiguished families. Wealthy for the day, they were exemplary Christians, who did all in their power to bring up their children in the fear and love of God, as well as to educate them. From his earliest youth Dominic's training, spiritual and intellectual, was the best; and he did not fail to respond to the opportunities which he received.

After graduation from his university courses, the future great Friar Preacher spent some years in the pursuit of the things of this world. However, he did not permit his occupation to chill the piety which had been instilled into him by his parents. In 1545, he received the habit of Saint Dominic at Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, and pronounced his religious vows there on November 26, 1546.[3] From the outset, de Salazar showed himself a model of his new life, and possessed of talents of the highest order. It is noteworthy that he was a fellow-student of the renowned theologians, Bartholomew de Medina and Dominic Bañez, and he proved their equal in every respect.

Indeed, because of his studious habits and the extraordinary penetration of his mind, those who knew him expected to see the future apostle soon take a front rank among the intellectual celebrities of their home land. So he might have done, had not the call

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as in the sketch of Peter Martín. See also Barcia, pp. 154, 167; Cuervo, I, 148-150, II, 276-295; Davila, Gil Gonzalez, "Teatro de las Grandezas de Madrid," Madrid, 1623, p. 266; Fernandez, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-307; Ferrando, Julián, O.P., and Fonseca, Joaquin, O.J., "Historia de los PP. Dominicos en las Islas Filipinas," I, Madrid, 1870; Fontana, *op. cit.*, pp. 83, 264; Franco, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-106; Groot, José Manuel; "Historia Eclesiastica y Civil de la Nueva Granada," I, 7-8, Bogota, 1889; Hernaez, *op. cit.*, I, 108-, II, 342-345, 357, 739-740; Ojea, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-66; Remesal, *op. cit.*, 672-675 (given thus, but it should be paginated 692-695); "The Catholic Encyclopedia," XII, 12, and XIII, 395; "Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada Europeo-Americana," LIII, 177-178.

[2]Rioja is also given as the place of his birth; but that is simply the name of the district. None of the historians we have seen give the date of his birth. We have estimated it from the fact that he was over eighty years of age at the time of his death.

[3]Groot and others, apparently following Father Alphonsus de Zamora's "Historia de la Provincia de Santo Antonino del Nuevo Reyno de Granada" (of which we could not find a copy), say that he came to America in 1528 or 1529. But the date of his profession, as shown by Cuervo's "Historiadores," proves that statement to be an error. Besides, had he been old enough for ordination in 1528 or 1529, he would have been ninety years of age at the time of his death.

of the missions in the New World appealed so strongly to his zeal. Possibly, in fact, an ardent desire to labor among the American aborigines had a part in bringing him to the Order. At any rate, he went to Mexico, or New Spain, shortly after his ordination, filled with enthusiasm for his chosen sphere of labor. However, Domingo's wishes were not to be realized at once. His reputation had preceded him, and the House of Studies, Saint Dominic's, in the Mexican capital needed a professor. Accordingly, on his arrival there, the provincial welcomed him as one eminently qualified for the position. Despite his intense longing for the active life of a harvester of souls with the Indians, Father de Salazar was too well trained a religious to hesitate to obey, when the voice of authority had spoken.

Dominic, therefore, taught for a time in Mexico City. His efforts in the professorial chair were a decided success. He realized that, whilst this work held him from that which appealed to his heart with a special force, it at least enabled him to prepare others for the missions. So did he believe that he was doing the divine will. Possibly his greatest consolation at this juncture, apart from that which he received from God through prayer, was the way in which his pupils drank in his own spirit of love for the red man and thirst to toil for his salvation. Many of them afterwards became great missionaries; and he felt that he shared in the merit of their labors, for he had helped to prepare them to execute their apostolate so successfully.

Throughout Mexico the learned Castilian was soon considered one of the country's best theologians. Meanwhile he studied the various Mexican dialects, which his brilliant mind enabled him to master in a short time. He spoke them with ease and fluency, and became a noted pulpit orator in the tongue of the aborigines as well as in that of the conquerors. He took advantage of his vacations for work among the Indians. Most likely it was the intense zeal which he showed on these occasions that induced his superiors to assign him to that sort of labor, for he was not left long at that of teaching. His activity and earnestness knew no limit. Like his confrères, he strove with all his might to protect the simple natives from oppression, as well as to better their temporal welfare and to train their souls in the way of religion.

Evidently the labors of the younger missionary won the heart of the veteran Father Gregory de Beteta. Kindred in spirit and zeal, in spite of the difference in their ages, they became fast friends. Their ardor seems to have caused them ever to look for

broader and harder fields of action—a trait that reminds one of the early years of the Order, when its members dreamed of the spiritual conquest of the world. Thus, with the permission of their superiors, and possibly in response to a call for help from their confrères in those parts, they started south from Mexico City, and journeyed, afoot whenever possible, to the torrid regions of Colombia and Venezuela. This appears to have been about 1552 or 1553. All along the route they kept a keen outlook for new tribes of aborigines to bring to the knowledge and service of Christ.[4]

Gregory de Beteta remained in the land of the equator; but Dominic de Salazar was soon recalled to Mexico. There he was when royal orders were received from Philip II for the colonizing and conversion of Florida. These documents arrived in 1558. No doubt the missionary's expedition to the far South in behalf of the American aborigines had attracted the attention of all, no less than heightened his reputation as an apostolic man. It is no wonder then that the watchful provincial, Father Dominic de Santa Maria, selected him at once to be one of the Friars Preacher, who should accompany the Floridian enterprise.

The story of the holy man's heroic toils, hardships, trials, and sufferings within our country has been told in the outlines of the lives of Fathers Peter Martín (or of Feria) and Dominic de la Anunciación. Father de Salazar took part in every difficult expedition of the de Luna enterprise. When Father Dominic de la Anunciación accompanied Don Angel de Villafañe from Pensacola Bay, or Santa Maria, to Havana, Father Dominic de Salazar and Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios remained at the gulf port with a detachment of the followers of Don Tristan de Luna y Arellano. There they were to await orders from the new governor, de Villafañe, who was to make further efforts for the colonization of Florida. Sometime in the summer or fall of 1561, the word came that the enterprise had been abandoned. Then they returned to Mexico, which they reached before the close of the same year.

Our missionary's strength must have been taxed to its utmost by his terrible experiences in the land which now belongs to our Southeastern United States. Yet he was too zealous a man to

[4]Groot, *op. cit.*, I, 7. Groot and some other writers say that he was in those parts in 1529. See the preceding note, which shows this supposition to be erroneous. But there can be no doubt about his being there some years later.

stay long idle in the cause of God. There were giants in Mexico in those days, one of whom was Father Dominic de Salazar, whose iron constitution caused him to recover rapidly from the exposure and hardships he had undergone in old Florida. Thus we soon find him again at the post of duty. Teaching and labor among the Indians seem to have been his principal occupations. Possibly it was in reward for both that the province gave him the degree of Master of Sacred Theology. The greater part of his time was given to the red man, with whose position he sympathized with his whole heart, and for whose spiritual and temporal betterment he continued to strive with all his might.

Thus, as the years wore along, we find him prior of the great Saint Dominic's, in the Mexican capital, and the flourishing convent of the same name in the City of Oaxaca. Several times he held the post of superior at some Indian mission, which was much more to his taste, for it brought him into closer touch with the particular objects of his zeal and affection. The character of the missionary and his work may be seen from the fact that he has been accorded an honorable place in the history of all the localities in which he labored, and was everywhere held in the highest esteem. In 1574, he found time to bring out a work entitled "Miracles and Indulgences of the Rosary" ("Milagros y Indulgencias del Rosario"). The Rosary was one of his own favorite devotions which he propagated among the aborigines. His book was intended as much for them as for the Spanish conquerors. It was pubished in Mexico City. So he toiled on until his fearless defense of the Indians brought him an unwelcomed promotion which removed him from Mexico to the Philippine Islands.

Unfortunately the opinions of those who would exploit the Indians in Spanish America gained the upper hand from time to time both there and in the mother-country. Towards the close of the third quarter of the sixteenth century, this influence led to a repartition of the natives of Mexico, which further discriminated against them on the old falacious ground of necessity and incapacity. Their unfailing friends, the Friars Preacher, at once rose to their defense. The question, as usual, waxed warm. One of the leaders of his Order in its opposition to the unjust arrangement was Father Dominic de Salazar. When all efforts had failed to settle the matter in accordance with their idea of right and justice, his ability led his confrères to select him as the man who should go to plead the cause of the poor Indians before the court of Spain. Possibly the positions of first consultor of the holy council and

"defender of the Indians," which he held, also had a part in this choice.[5]

At the beginning, the Spanish council of the Indies (*Consejo de las Indias*), under the influence of the exploiters, refused to hear the Fathers' messenger. Some authors say that these authorities even had him thrown into prison for quite a while. Undismayed by this repulse, on regaining his liberty, he began a course of lectures on the subject in the church attached to the Convent of Our Lady of Antocha, Madrid, in a chapel of which the last remains of the venerable Bartholomew de Las Casas had been laid to rest. These discourses to the public attracted so wide an attention that they simply necessitated action. The council, therefore, notified the fearless defender of the American aborigines that they would take his plea under consideration, and requested him quietly to await their decision. Meanwhile, as he felt that the process of law, under the circumstances, would require some time, he went to Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, where he had received the habit of the Order.

Father de Salazar's reputation had preceded him to the mother-country. His extraordinary labors in the New World were well known there. The authorities at least, both civil and ecclesiastic, were conversant with the fact that not only did he stand high in the esteem of the Mexican hierarchy, but was also frequently consulted by them, and never failed to prove one of their most reliable staffs of support in cases of need. Evidently the Friar Preacher's discourses in favor of the Indians in Mexico made a strong appeal to Philip II. No doubt, too, this impression combined with the knowledge which the monarch had received of de Salazar through other channels to determine him to select the former Floridian missionary as the first head of the Church of the Philippines.

These islands had been added to the dominions of Spain by Philip himself some fifteen years earlier, and he was anxious to find a worthy, capable man, into whose hands the charge of the religious affairs in them might be placed. Now, therefore, using his canonical right of presentation, he despatched Father Dominic de Salazar's name to Gregory XIII that he might be appointed their first bishop, with Manila as his episcopal city. The project

[5]A letter of Father James (Diego) de Santa Maria, O.P., to Philip II shows that de Salazar was about to start for Spain March 24, 1575 (Cuevas, *op. cit.*, II, 495-497). It is possible that, according to the new calendar this was really in 1576.

proceeded rapidly for that day. Indeed, our American apostle received the Bulls of his nomination while he was still at Saint Stephen's, awaiting the action of the council of the Indies in behalf of the Indians of Mexico. This was late in 1579, or early in 1580. At first, he resolved to decline the appointment; for he had no love for such honors, while his advanced years made him feel that a diocese in the wilds of the Philippines, where everything had to be built up from the ground, should be entrusted to a younger man. But argument, influence, and authority finally obliged him to accept the onerous post. He then hastened his consecration that he might begin his new work as soon as possible.

Prior to this time, there were a few Augustinians, Franciscans, and secular priests in the Philippine Islands. However, as Bishop de Salazar soon learned on investigation, these harvesters of souls were too few in numbers to attend to the many spiritual needs of the country. He therefore set about procuring more missionaries. His Order gave him twenty. With these he started for Manila via Mexico, which was then the ordinary route of communication between Spain and the Philippines. To the holy man's dismay, a pestilence broke out on their ship, of which all his companions, except Fathers Jerome Garcia and Christopher de Salvatierra, died either at sea or soon after he reached Santa Cruz. Even the two priests named had been at the point of death. Indeed, Father Garcia was so debilitated by the disease that he was obliged to remain in Mexico in order to recuperate.

Fortunately, the Bishop himself, whose naturally strong constitution had been hardened by the life he had led in the New World, escaped the malady. A man of strong will, he did not suffer the catastrophe of the loss of his missionaries to discourage him. He at once set about replacing them. From his indomitable courage there radiated a kindness which reflected his character. It won affection as well as confidence. Evidently the superiors of his own Order in Mexico needed the authorization of their Master General before they could act in the matter. This fact, there can be no doubt, rather than the lack of members who could be spared, explains why they could let him have no men. Fortunately, the Discalced Franciscans and the Society of Jesus were able to go to his aid. Six of these sons of Saint Francis and three or four of Saint Ignatius placed themselves at his disposal. With these and Father Christopher de Salvatierra he sailed as soon as he could make arrangements.[6]

[6]According to the Dominican constitutions, the Mexican provincial had no power to give the bishop any missionaries outside the province. Evidently

Bishop Dominic de Salazar reached Manila in March, 1581.[7] He was then a man of nearly the allotted age of three score and ten years. Yet, for he was still vigorous, he immediately took up his arduous duties with remarkable energy. He saw that with the few priests at his command the light of the Faith could not be extended to the many islands which his extensive diocese embraced. No sooner, therefore, had he taken a survey of his needs than he began to try to obtain more missionaries. While he did not overlook other sources of supply for ministerial help, he rather preferred Augustinians, Franciscans, and members of his own Order. For years these had labored hand in hand, on terms of intimate friendship, and with marvellous results among the Indians of Mexico, where he himself had spent the greater part of his active life. He felt, therefore, that they would do the same among the Malays of the Philippine Islands.

All such matters had then to be transacted with the secular powers in Spain. Communications were slow, for the vessels that plied between the islands and the mother-country were few and far apart. Besides, a number of the members of the royal court, who were inimical to the Friars Preacher because of their unremitting defense of the American aborigines, opposed their going to the new country as missionaries in every way and under every pretext. Not a little opposition to the Order taking its part in the conversion of the Malays seems to have also developed in other unexpected quarters.

In spite of the many difficulties which confronted him. Bishop de Salazar persevered in his efforts to procure Friar-Preacher missionaries for his diocese until success finally crowned his attempts. Possibly he would never have obtained that assistance, had it not been for the hearty co-operation of the Province of Mexico. It sent one of its most efficient men, Father John Crisostomo, to Spain, and even to Rome, in his behalf.[8] The eminent divine, who combined much learning with consummate diplomacy and a thorough knowledge of the missionary life, left Mexico in 1581; and it was not until the spring of 1585 that he eventually secured the

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he had received no such extraordinary authority from the Master General. Remesal seems to think that Father de Salvatierra did not go to the Philippines until somewhat later. However, he certainly accompanied the Bishop.

[7]Remesal (*op. cit.*, p. 673) says he arrived there in May, 1580. We follow Ferrando-Fonseca (*op. cit.*, I, 192). As these two Fathers belonged to the Philippine Province, we fancy they had better sources from which to draw.

[8]We are not certain but that Cristostomo was a part of this man's name in Religion (Chrysostom), rather than his family name.

consent of the royal court to take a band of confrères to the Philippines.

Crisostomo now gathered twenty-four of his brothers in religion for the islands. He himself was appointed their superior, but it was not until July 17, 1586, that the apostolic party succeeded in sailing for America. Meanwhile, Father Crisostomo had resigned the superiorship, and the place was given to Father John de Castro, who had held the office of provincial for two terms in Chiapa and Guatemala, but was then in Spain. They reached Santa Cruz, Mexico, on September 29, 1586. There again every sort of expedient (including such moral dissuasions as the dangers and hardships of the long voyage, the impossibility of converting the Filipinoes, the need of priests in Spanish America, and the argument that the islands of the East were already abundantly supplied with missionaries) was resorted to in order to prevent the Friars Preacher from continuing their journey.

These machinations seem to have all but accomplished their purpose. However, on the feast of Saint Mathias, February 24, 1587, eighteen or nineteen of the original band of missionaries sailed from Acapulco, a magnificent land-locked port on the Pacific Coast of Mexico. Three of them had died in the land of the Aztecs. Father John Cobo remained behind on business with a lay Brother; whilst Father John Crisostomo, who had guided the expedition, was too ill to continue his way at the time. Three others waited so that they could take a later vessel to Macao, for Bishop de Salazar wished his confrères to establish themselves there also, in order to be prepared to enter China from different points. Those destined for the Philippines proper reached Manila on July 21, 1587.[9] By every one were they gladly received; but none accorded them quite so cordial a welcome as the pious prelate.

History shows that Bishop Dominic de Salazar made no mistake in his persevering efforts to obtain these auxiliaries. They began their work immediately; and out of it quickly grew the Province of the Holy Rosary, which is one of the most historic in the Order. Dominic de Salazar, to whose spirit it has ever re-

[9]Remesal says they arrived at Manila in the spring of 1587. We follow Ferrando-Fonseca for the reason given in note 7 above. Remesal is also of the opinion that forty Friars Preacher started from Spain for Manila at this time, and that twenty of them were stopped in Mexico by the intrigues mentioned in the text. However, Ferrando-Fonseca (*op. cit.*, I, 222-223) say the careful, painstaking contemporary writer was deceived by inaccurate sources which seemed perfectly reliable at the time. Franco follows Remesal.

mained faithful, is it father.[10] It was not long before Fathers made their way into China and Japan, where many of them have won the crown of martyrdom. To this day the province maintains zealous missionary bands in both those pagan countries, whose toil bears glorious results. Its members, who have never ceased to foster the ideals which he cherished continue to regard him as a father but little less worthy than Saint Dominic himself.

Nothing appeared to escape the venerable prelate's ever watchful eye. One of his first cares was to erect a suitable cathedral in Manila, whose lone little house of prayer had been destroyed by an earthquake before his arrival. He travelled and labored much; but his chief aim was to provide his diocese with zealous clergymen, for he felt that, once it was properly supplied with good priests, things would go well from a religious point of view. He did obtain a number. For their guidance he wrote and edited a book of rules and regulations on administering the Sacrament of Penance, specially adapted to the orient. It received a warm approbation, proved very useful, and long served as a norm for the Philippine clergy. Thus toiled he on until 1591. Early in that year he held a diocesan synod, at which he laid before the assembled missionaries his plans for the Church in their part of the Malayan Archipelago which were adopted with a consent both unanimous and cordial.

Within twelve months after his ascension to the throne of Peter, the great Franciscan Pope, Sixtus V, issued the Constitution *Romanus Pontifex,* which required the Catholic hierarchy even in such remote parts of the world as the Philippines to come to Rome at least once every ten years in order to render a report of their respective dioceses to the Holy See. This was on December 20, 1585. Bishop de Salazar now felt it was time for him to make this *ad limina* visit, for he had not been in the Eternal City since his consecration. No doubt this intention caused him to call his clergy together in council just when he did. He wished to take advantage of his presence in the Capital of Christendom in order to obtain the papal sanction of enactments which he believed would be conducive to the good of religion in the part of the Church under his jurisdiction. Another purpose of this journey was to plead the cause of the oppressed Filipino before the monarch of Spain.

Father Christopher de Salvatierra was one of the only two of

[10]In the same sense, we may also call him the father of the great Jesuit mission in the Philippines.

the twenty missionaries who started from Spain with our prelate in 1580 to survive the pestilence which broke out on their ship. However, despite his almost fatal illness, he continued his way to Manila. From the time of his arrival, he had been vicar general and a missionary in the Province of Bataan. He was a man of an outstanding character and ability, and held in high esteem by all. For this reason, Bishop de Salazar placed him in charge of the diocese during his absence, and started on his long journey in June, 1591.[11]

Although he was still virile and active, despite his years, he stopped to rest in the province from which he had been taken to govern the Church of the Philippines. He was at Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, while Father Augustine Davila y Padilla was engaged on the story of the attempt to colonize Florida by Dons Tristan de Luna y Arellano and Angel de Villafañe. The two Friars Preacher must have known each other intimately; and since the venerable ordinary of the East had been one of the prime ecclesiastical factors in that historic enterprise, there can be no doubt but that the author of its only *real* history consulted him extensively on the subject.[12]

From Mexico City he continued his way to Madrid, which he reached sometime in 1592. There his first act, after returning thanks to God for his safe arrival, was to give the King of Spain and the royal council an account of the management, both spiritual and temporal, of the vast diocese entrusted to his care. Philip II seems to have been particularly gratified with it; nor did he hesitate to show his delight. The Bishop was also successful with his pleas in behalf of his beloved Filipinoes.

Just how long the apostle of the Philippines was detained in

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[11]Remesal places all this in 1590. We follow Ferrando-Fonseca for the reason already given. These writers give a sketch of this part of de Salazar's life in *op. cit.*, I, 297-301.

[12]The other histories of the de Luna-Villafañe attempt to colonize Florida have all been based on that by Davila y Padilla. Until the appearance of "The Luna Papers" his work was practically the only source available. Even they throw little new light on the subject, other than give some dates, the names of various officers engaged in the enterprise, and aid in approximating the localities explored. They corroborate the Friar Preacher's account admirably, and necessitate but few changes in it. He knew personally a number of his confrères and others engaged in the expedition. Besides, he had the historic outlines of the Mexican Province by Fathers Vincent de Las Casas and Dominic de la Anunciación (or John Paz), from which to draw his material. His work, primarily concerned with his Order, bears the stamp of a careful and reliable historian. Until the discovery of further documents his story must remain *the* source for all who would retell the interesting episode.

the Iberian Peninsula by these and other affairs, for he also took advantage of his presence there to enlist more missionaries in the service of the eastern Church, we do not know. Yet 1593 must have been somewhat advanced when he continued his way to Rome. Sixtus V, in compliance with whose orders he had undertaken the long journey, died on August 27, 1590, or nearly a year before he left home. Then came in rapid succession Urban VII, Gregory XIV, and Innocent IX, each of whom lived barely long enough to be crowned with the tiara. Finally, Clement VIII was elected Pope on January 30, 1592. This zealous Pontiff joined his court in receiving the prelate with open arms on his arrival in the Eternal City.

Bishop de Salazar's life and labors, whether in America or in the Philippines, had not been unknown at Rome. This fact undoubtedly combined with the account which he gave of his diocese to procure him many favors. Other factors in the warm reception accorded him were his humility, practical judgment, and evident zeal. At his request three new sees were erected in the islands. To that of Nueva Segovia was given Father Michael de Benavides, O.P., the Bishop's travelling companion, as its first ordinary. An Augustinian, Peter de Agurto, received the appointment to the Diocese of the Holy Name (*Santisimo Nombre*), Cebú. A Recollect Franciscan, Louis Maldonado, was nominated to that of Nueva Caceres; but he returned the Bulls.[13] This division of honors between the three Religious Orders, is a further proof of de Salazar's absolute impartiality. That no Jesuit was accorded a similar assignment was likely because the Fathers, in accordance with the spirit of their Rule, declined any such proposition.

Spain's portion of the Malayan Archipelago was made an ecclesiastical province, with Manila as its Metropolitan See. The acts of the synod held by the Bishop shortly before starting on his *ad limina* visit were readily confirmed; while Clement VIII revoked the restrictions of his predecessors in regard to the missionaries who were to be accepted for the islands. De Salazar wished to resign the miter, and wrote to the Fathers at his beloved Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, that he intended to retire there. However, as he seemed still hale and strong, despite his years, the Holy See refused to permit him to lay down the reins of authority. In-

[13]It is noteworthy that the first three bishops appointed to Nueva Carceres were Franciscans, and all declined the miter. The fourth one nominated was an Augustinian. A Franciscan succeeded de Salazar in Manila. He lived but a few months, and Michael de Benavides was transferred thither from Nueva Segovia.

deed, this was the only concession denied him by the Sovereign Pontiff, who joined all in congratulating him on the good he had accomplished in the distant diocese, and the report which he brought to Rome.

Naturally enough, these transactions detained Dominic de Salazar in the Eternal City a long time, for Clement VIII wished to learn all about the distant new Church. No sooner had he completed his business, and learned definitely that he would not be allowed to relinquish his charge, than the Archbishop-elect started back to Manila, possibly little dreaming that he should not live to receive the Bulls of his archiepiscopal appointment or the pallium. He was then over eighty years of age. When he reached Spain, he went again to Madrid for further conferences with Philip II in behalf of his diocese and the native population. There he fell sick, and was taken to Saint Thomas' College (Collegio de Santo Tomás), belonging to his Order, where he soon died the death of the just. So passed to eternal glory the former missionary of Florida. He left a name that is still held in veneration in many parts of the world.

The holy man was buried in the chapel of Saint Thomas' College. On the marble slab which covered his mortal remains were carved the words: "Here lies Brother Dominic de Salazar of the Order of Preachers, the first Bishop of the Philippine Islands, a man renowned for his learning, a faithful Religious, a most zealous pastor to all his flock, a father to the poor and he himself verily poor. He died on the fourth day of December, 1594."[14] A true servant of Christ could hardly desire a nicer epitaph. What is more, it was richly deserved.

Bishop de Salazar's death was deeply mourned throughout Spain. But the sorrow of the country's sovereign was perhaps specially keen. The king's regard for the Bishop of Manila may be judged by the following fact given us by the best Spanish encyclopedia, which says: "Philip II held Salazar in such high esteem that, the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo [Gaspar de Quirorga] having died on the same day, he ordered the members of his council to attend the obsequies and burial of Salazar rather than those of the Primate of Spain."[15] Father Philip M. Fine-

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[14]Remesal, *op. cit.*, p. 692: *"Hic jacet Frater Dominicus de Salazer, Ordinis Praedicatorum, Philippinarum Episcopus primus, doctrina clarus, verus religiosae vitae sectator, suarum ovium piissimus Pastor, pauperum Pater, et ipse vere pauper. Obiit quarta die Decembris, 1594."*

[15]"Ecliclopedia Universal," as in note 1, LIII, 177-178: *"Felipe II tenia en tan alta estima á Salazar que, habiendo fallecido en el mismo dia el*

gan, S.J., but tells the plain truth, when he says that Bishop de Salazar is "one of the greatest figures in the history of the Philippines."[16] From the time he arrived in the islands he espoused the cause of the Filipino with the same fearlessness that he had shown in the defense of the Indian of Mexico. Until the end he continued his protection of the islanders with a fortitude and courage which won for him the titles of "the intrepid Salazar," and "the Las Casas of the Philippines." One of the things which induced him to accept the miter of Manila was the hope that he might thus contribute in some way towards the conversion of China. The work which he initiated to that end still continues.

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cardinal-arzobispo de Toldeo, mandó á los consejos que asistiesen con preferencia al sepelio y funerales de Salazar, antes que á los del Primado." See also Ferrando-Fonseca, *op. cit.*, I, 297.

[16]"The Catholic Encyclopedia," XII, 12. See also XIII, 395.

FATHER JOHN DE CONTRERAS AND COMPANIONS

Father De Contreras[1]

The patronymic de Contreras is not without honor in the Iberian Peninsula and Hispanic America, for many who bore it have indelibly written their names on the pages of history. This fact assures us of the good breeding and education of the present subject. We tell of him before his two companions in the second part of the fruitless attempt, under Tristan de Luna and Angel de Villafañe, to colonize Florida from Mexico because he is the first mentioned by Fathers Davila y Padilla and Franco in that connection. None of the authors give the names of Father John de Contreras' parents, or the date of his birth. However, we know that he was born in Seville, southwestern Spain.

That quaint old Andalusian city was one of the ports of departure and entry for vessels plying between Spain and her transatlantic possessions. Naturally, therefore, in no part of the peninsula were reports of the great wealth to be found in the New World more rife. This fact very likely had its part in bringing John de Contreras to America. At any rate, he went to Mexico as a young man. There the grace of God touched his heart, and he became a Friar Preacher at Saint Dominic's, in the Mexican capital, making his Religious profession on June 7, 1543. From the start, as was the case with all the missionaries whom we have sketched in these papers, he showed that his was a true vocation.

Ordained to the priesthood, the date of which we are not told, Father de Contreras soon began to make good the hopes to which his novitiate and studies had given birth in his confrères. He was employed in many places, as well as entrusted with many positions of honor and responsibility. Everywhere and in everything he gave complete satisfaction, no less than showed good judgment and executive ability. Whilst his zeal knew no bounds, it led him rather to the care of the Indians, the poor, and the unfortunate. He acquired a perfect command of the language of the Mexicans, which he incessantly used for their welfare, both temporal and spiritual. So was he a man of rare courage and fortitude.

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[1]Sources: Davila y Padilla (except the second reference); Franco; Lowery; and Shea—all as in note 1 to the sketch of Peter Martín; and Ojea, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

Father Franco styles Father John de Contreras a great and outstanding religious (*muy gran religioso*). Father Ojea says he was a most obedient and exemplary priest of God, endowed with rare humility and charity, and conspicuous for his success as a missionary (*muy observante religioso y exemplar; muy humilde y caritativo hasta la muerte, y gran ministro del evangelio*).[2] These, no doubt, were the qualifications which determined the choice of de Contreras for the Floridian undertaking. Great care was always used by the superiors in their selection of harvesters of souls for such enterprises; and in no case were the authorities perhaps quite so particular or exacting as in the case of those who were to be sent among the aborigines north of the Gulf of Mexico. It was felt that nothing less than real heroism could succeed in planting the cross of Christ in those inhospitable regions.

Our Friar Preacher was not in the first band of missionaries who sailed from Vera Cruz with Don Tristan de Luna y Arellano on June 11, 1559. He came to Florida, after the return to Mexico of Fathers Peter Martín (or of Feria), James de Santo de Domingo, and John de Mazuelas, with Don Angel de Villafañe, who was sent to supersede de Luna. Father John de Contreras' companions were Father Gregory de Beteta and Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios. That he was associated with such stalwarts as these and Fathers de la Anunciación and de Salazar is another proof of his exceptional character.

As has been told in the preceding chapter, Father John de Contreras and his two confrères arrived at Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay, on April 1, 1561. There they remained until the new Governor of Florida, Angel de Villafañe, made a thorough investigation of the efforts of his predecessor, Tristan de Luna y Arellano, for colonization at that port, Nanipacna (or Santa Cruz), and Coosa. After an examination of the facts, de Villafañe, in compliance with the instructions of Mexico's viceroy, Louis de Velasco, proceeded to our South Atlantic seaboard for the purpose of making a further attempt to establish settlements in the country. Father Dominic de Salazar and Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios, by orders, remained at the gulf port with a contingent to await the outcome of the renewed enterprise. The plan was to connect this place with the Atlantic side through a colony at Coosa, and possibly another at Nanipacna. Indeed, it was hoped that

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[2]Franco, *op. cit.*, p. 27; Ojea, *op. cit.*, p. 68. In Spanish *muy* joined to a positive adjective, as Franco and Ojea have done in the case of Father John de Contreras, implies everything good in a superlative degree.

clusters of Spaniards might be eventually placed in various advantageous points throughout that part of the country.

Fathers John de Contreras, Gregory de Beteta, and Dominic de la Anunciación left Santa Maria on de Villafañe's ships. From Havana, whither the governor went for additional supplies, de la Anunciación returned to Mexico in order to recuperate his strength and resume his work there. But de Contreras and tireless de Beteta accompanied de Villafañe on his exploration of the eastern coast of old Florida. Their purpose was not merely to act as chaplains for the Spaniards on the expedition; it was emphatically to prepare the way for other missionaries, especially those of their own Order, in case a suitable location should be discovered for a settlement of the white conquerors. Once they themselves were established in such a locality, more confrères would certainly be added that the light of the Christian faith might be carried to the aborigines in every direction.

Documents still in existence show that Angel de Villafañe examined various ports along the eastern Floridian coast, and continued his way as far north as Saint Helena (Santa Eléna), his objective point.[3] A number of writers, whose opinion has every appearance of being correct, identify Saint Helena with the present Port Royal Sound, Beaufort County, South Carolina, just above where Georgia first touches the Atlantic Ocean. Wherever it was, there can be no doubt but that Fathers John de Contreras and Gregory de Beteta were ever on the watch for Indians, among whom they might labor and establish an apostolic center. It is equally certain that de Villafañe, acting in concert with them, examined the shore-lines with no little care for the same purpose. Indeed, this was one of the main objects of the enterprise entrusted to his charge. Possibly the natives razed their villages and fled with their provisions, at the approach of the white man, as they seem to have done in the case of Tristan de Luna y Arellano and his followers farther to the west. At any rate, no prospects for either a colony of Spaniards or a center of missionary activity were found.[4]

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[3]See "Recueil de Piéces sur La Floride" (by Henri Ternaux-Compans), Paris, 1841, pages 150-153.

[4]We have nowhere seen it expressly stated that Father de Contreras was on this exploration with de Villafañe. Yet it can not be doubted that he accompanied the new governor. Zealous, anxious Gregory de Beteta could not have failed to follow the expedition to the end. It was his third attempt for Florida's conversion; and he certainly accompanied de Villafañe as long as there was a ray of hope for success. With him went de Contreras, for the fathers never travelled without a confrère as a companion.

For these reasons, Don Angel de Villafañe finally gave up all hope of success. No doubt, too, Fathers de Contreras and de Beteta concurred in his opinion. It was a keen disappointment to both of them. Yet they could but be convinced that, under the circumstances, it would be more conducive to the good of religion, as well as to the glory of God, to devote their energies to the cause of souls elsewhere. De Villafañe, therefore, had his ships steered for Vera Cruz, Mexico, which the party reached before the close of 1561. It was an unfortunate ending to a glorious project undertaken not only with courage, but also in a spirit of humanity and religion undefiled.[5]

We could not discover just when our Friar Preacher returned to Mexico; yet, as stated, it was certainly before the close of 1561. There he resumed the work in which he had been long employed prior to coming to our shores. Again did he journey and toil in every direction in the cause of souls, the Church, and religion. Again was he entrusted with positions of honor, care, and responsibility, never failing to acquit himself in them to the satisfaction of all concerned, as well as with the accomplishment of much good. To do good, in fact, was a passion with him. So labored he on until age and work so sapped his strength that he was no longer equal to the travels demanded of those engaged on the missions among the aborigines. He then retired to Saint Dominic's, Mexico City.

But advanced years and infirmity did not cause Father John de Contreras to relax the practice of penance, mortification, and piety, which he had cultivated all his life as a Religious. Indeed, we are told that he rather increased them. Nor did he discontinue his efforts for the salvation of souls in the Mexican capital. On the contrary, until the end, he gave his time unsparingly to the work of the confessional. As had ever been his custom, his predilection drew him to the poor, the lowly, the suffering, the Indians, and the negroes. These classes especially never failed to find in the holy man a father, the tenderness of whose heart had not been chilled by age. He surrendered his pure soul to God on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 1590, regretted by all, whether within or without the Order. He was regarded as a saint. Father Franco places him in his list of the members of the Mexican Province who practised heroic charity and died in the odor of sanctity.[6] It was through men like him that the Prov-

[5]It is true a storm had its part in ending the exploration; but this was not until all were convinced that any further efforts were useless.

[6]Franco, *op. cit.*, p. 559.

ince of Saint James, Mexico, maintained its high standard of religious, intellectual, and missionary life.

Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios[1]

Quite naturally, though there are exceptions to the rule, the more retired life of any Religious Order's lay Brothers prevents them from becoming so well known as its priests. Yet the merits and the reward in heaven of these lowlier confrères are none the less for that. Sometimes, indeed, they are greater than those of the clergyman who has attained much worldly renown. The God of justice, who sees all things, does not permit their humble labors or their virtues to go unrequited. Doubtless it was because he still lived, at the time of its composition, that Father Davila y Padilla tells us nothing of the life of Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios in his history of the Province of Saint James, Mexico, other than what we have already recorded in these pages. Fortunately, Father Alphonsus (Alonso) Franco gives us a most interesting and edifying, though brief, outline of the holy man's career in his continuation of the history of the same province.[2]

Franco devotes a chapter of four folio pages to the two lay Brothers, John de Sena and Matthew de la Madre de Dios. He says they were intimate friends and competitors, in the way of sanctity. As John made his Religious profession on July 1, 1538, or some sixteen years before Matthew, practically the first three of the four pages are devoted to him. But the author begins his story of Matthew by telling us that it was in all things very similar to that which he had just recounted of John. From this fact one can but conclude that Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios practised virtue to the same heroic degree, and attained to the same height of holiness, as Brother John de Sena.

Unfortunately, Father Franco does not give the date or the country of Brother Matthew's birth. However, the indications are that he was born in Spain, and came to the New World in search of gold or fame. Our readers will recall Brother Bartholomew Matéos, whose life we have sketched on a previous page. Like him, Matthew had been a soldier in Hispanic America, as well as known for his daring and bravery. Like Bartholomew again, when he exchanged the military camp for the religi-

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[1]Sources: Davila y Padilla (except the second reference); Franco; Lowery; and Shea, as in note 1 to the sketch of Peter Martín. See also Franco, pp. 156-160.

[2]Franco, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-160.

ous monastery, he did so with all the ardor of his soul. John de Sena, at first, took the clerical habit; but, out of sheer humility, he had his status changed to that of a lay Brother during the simple novitiate. In Matthew the same virtue, in which he excelled, possibly combined with his strong friendship for John to induce him to request the habit of the lay Brother from the start. At any rate, he had a good mind and considerable education; nor does he seem to have been too far advanced in age to aspire to the priesthood.

Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios entered the Order of Friars Preacher at the Priory of Saint Dominic, Mexico City. His novice master was the noted Father Christopher de la Cruz, who trained many of the best members of that province, lay Brothers as well as clerics. Under the guidance of that skilled director of souls he made rapid progress in the Religious life. By the time of his profession, which took place on September 21, 1554, he was considered a model Brother by the entire convent. Among his most striking virtues were humility, obedience, practice of the rule, self-denial, kindness towards the sick or infirm, love for the poor or distressed, and a spirit of industry. By this time, too, he had become as dextrous with his Rosary and other prayers or devotions as he had been with the sword and shield in the army. In short, he was a perfectly metamorphosed man.

None of the writers give either the baptismal or the family name of Brother Matthew. During the first years after his Religious profession the superiors no doubt employed him in practically every kind of occupation which falls to the life of those of his status in the Order. However, the office of infirmarian for Saint Dominic's Priory seems to have been his main charge. In everything he revealed good tact and judgment, as well as proved his splendid character. The large Community had no better or more generally useful Brother. Father Franco assures us that Matthew was an excellent Brother in every way (*muy buen fraile*).[3] After all, a lay Brother is to sanctify himself no less by his labors than by his prayers.

Before the return of Fathers Peter Martín, James de Santo Domingo, and John de Mazuelas from Florida, Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios had firmly established himself in the confidence, esteem, and affection not merely of his confrères in the province but of every one with whom he came in contact. When, therefore, the former Floridian missionaries revealed the sad plight

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

of the Spaniards who were still at Santa Maria, or Pensacola Bay, the provincial, Father Peter de la Peña, at once determined to send him with the new expedition to be conducted by Don Angel de Villafañe. Another reason for choosing Matthew was his gentle goodness towards the sick or debilitated and his skill as an infirmarian, for the strength of many at the port, it was feared, must have been undermined by the ordeals they had suffered in their explorations. His Friar-Preacher companions on this journey, as has been seen in previous sketches, were Fathers John de Contreras and Gregory de Beteta. They reached the gulf station on April 1, 1561. Matthew must have been a godsend for those of the colonists who were infirm.

It will be recalled, of course, that Don Louis de Velasco, the Viceroy of New Spain, was resolved to leave nothing untried in order to plant permanent settlements north of the Gulf of Mexico; and that de Villafañe had supplanted Tristan de Luna y Arellano for that purpose. The Friars Preacher, because of their kindly interest in the Indian, were still to be the clerical element in the enterprise. Thus we see that Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios was also to take the place of brave Brother Bartholomew Matéos, who had been drowned early in the undertaking. When Angel de Villafañe sailed, via Havana, for Saint Helena, on the eastern Floridian coast, Matthew was left at Santa Maria (Pensacola Bay) with Father Dominic de Salazar, a number of the settlers whose health had been weakened by hardship or exposure, and a few soldiers. This seems to have been sometime in late April or early May, 1561. No doubt Brother Matthew remained on the gulf that he might aid in restoring the strength of the sickly for future service in the proposed scheme of colonization. However, this party received word some months later that the country was to be abandoned. Then they started for Mexico, which they reached before the close of the same year.

No sooner did he regain Saint Dominic's, Mexico City, than Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios resumed his customary labors and spiritual exercises. So he lived and toiled for more than forty years after this time. To all, whether his brethren or people in the world, he continued to be a source of genuine edification, esteemed, loved, and admired. The sick in the convent, and the poor or distressed without, remained the object of his tenderest solicitude. During this time, if we may judge by Father Franco's history, he and Brother John de Sena were drawn closer by their bond of friendship. Side by side they labored, prayed,

sought the salvation of souls, carried on their works of charity, and vied the one with the other in the attainment of sanctity.

Brother John de Sena was evidently the older man by several years. He died in Saint Dominic's Priory, Mexico City, July 10, 1602, having faithfully served God as a Friar Preacher for more than sixty-five years. During his last illness Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios was constantly at his bedside to look after his every want. When Matthew saw that his friend had only a short time to live, he besought him to ask Our Lord, when he should be in the divine presence, to grant him the favor of soon receiving his own eternal reward. John pledged his word to do this, and the promise lessened not a little Matthew's sorrow over the loss of one to whom he had long been united by a noble affection.

Heaven did not delay its answer to Brother John de Sena's prayer. Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios received the last Sacraments with great devotion, and surrendered his pure soul to God on August 5, 1602, not quite a month from the time of the death of his beloved companion, at whose side he was buried. The Mexican capital turned out in great numbers to pay him their last respects, and to assist at his funeral. The memory of both of them is still held in veneration. Father Franco places both of them in his list of the saintly men of the province.[4]

In this connection, as Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios is the last but one of the Friars Preacher north of the Gulf of Mexico in the sixteenth century to be sketched by us, we may again call attention to an interesting document of that era. It throws not a little light on our subject by revealing the character of the part of the Order to which the greater number of these missionaries belonged. On February 10, 1569, the Fathers in New Spain sent an outline of the history of their Province of Saint James to the Master General, Vincent Giustiniani. The record shows the province to have been a model in every way, and claims that no better body of lay Brothers could be found anywhere. Its testimony is certainly confirmed by the papers which we have laid before the reader; for only in a province, where zeal and fidelity to rule reigned supreme, could such men have been found. It was so until the Religious Orders, and even the Church itself, were manacled by the spirit of secularism which eventually became dominant in the government (or rather misgovernment) of the country.[5]

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[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 561.
[5] "Documentos Ineditos," V, 447-478.

FATHER GREGORY DE BETETA[1]

Father Gregory de Beteta's name has appeared time and again in the course of these pages, but none of the Spanish Friar-Preacher authors whom we have seen give either the date or the place of his birth. Touron, on what authority we do not know, says he was a native of the City of Leon, in northwestern Spain.[2] However, Spanish-born he certainly was. That he was born sometime from 1505 to 1510 is indicated by his previous studies and the date of his Religious profession, which must have been delayed by sickness.

The three historians of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, whose works have been published by Father Cuervo, assure us that the great missionary belonged to a noble and wealthy family. His parents sent him to the University of Salamanca at an early age, where he made rapid progress in his studies, and received the degree of doctor in jurisprudence.

Three things are said to have stood out prominently in the career of young de Beteta at this famed center of learning, superior mentality, serious industry, and rare fidelity to his religious duties. A brilliant future awaited him in the world. But he turned his thoughts to the service of God in the religious life. The Order of Saint Dominic, whose members played a conspicuous rôle in his alma mater, was that which he selected. From the university, therefore, he passed to the Priory of Saint Stephen to don the garb of a Friar Preacher. Quite naturally his parents were much grieved by such a step. He was an only son, to whom they expected to leave their immense fortune, as well as their sole hope of perpetuating the name of the noble family. However, they were too true Christians to seek to place any barrier in the way of his vocation. So they bowed their heads to what they felt was a divine call.

We are not given the date of the reception of the habit of Saint

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[1]Sources: Bancroft, *op. cit.*, II, 594-595; Barcia, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26, 32-41, 43; Beteta and Cancer, as in note 1 to sketch of Cancer; Cuervo, *op. cit.*, I, 98-103, II, 131-139, III, 208-217 (see Cuervo also, as in note 1 to sketch of Peter Martín); Davila, Gil Gonzalez, *op. cit.*, II, fol. 71; Davila y Padilla, *op. cit.*, pp. 222-230, 231-278, 572-575; "Documentos Ineditos," III, 520-530, V, 447-478, XIII, 280-283; Fernandez, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-119; Franco, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-39; Groot, *op. cit.*, I, 7-8; Hernaez, *op. cit.*, II, 145; Lowery, as in note 1 to sketch of Peter Martín; "The Luna Papers"; Remesal, *op. cit.*, pp. 514-519; Shea, as in note 1 to sketch of Peter Martín; Smith, as *ibid.*; Ternaux-Compans, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-143 (see note 1 to sketch of Cancer), and 150-153; Touron, *op. cit.*, XIII, 216-228.

[2]Touron, *op. cit.*, XIII, 216.

Dominic by the youth of promise; but we know that he immediately made a strong impression on his superiors which was soon to stand him in good stead. Up to this time he had been blessed with excellent health, no less than possessed of great strength. During the year of his novitiate, he contracted a severe case of scrofulous tumor in the neck. It was a rigid rule of the convent to retain only the robust and hardy, but the Fathers were greatly loath to lose a novice of Gregory's character and ability. For this reason, they determined to send him to Paris that he might pray for his recovery at the tomb of Saint Louis, which was then a place of pilgrimage for those similarly afflicted; and one of the community was delegated to accompany him on the journey.

To the delight of all at Saint Stephen's, Brother Gregory de Beteta returned to Salamanca from France free from every trace of his sickness, and the community considered the cure a miracle. Since his novitiate had no doubt been prolonged by ill health, his Religious profession was now hastened, and he took the solemn vows of a Dominican on September 29, 1533.[3] Then began the study of philosophy, theology, and the Sacred Scriptures in earnest. A splendid corps of teachers combined with the future American missionary's genius and industry to enable him to make marvellous progress in all three. His favorite seems to have been the revealed word of God. He shone no less conspicuously as a model life in every respect.

Nowhere could we find the date of Brother Gregory's ordination to the priesthood; but it was no doubt hastened by an education which had been rounded out at the University of Salamanca before his entrance into the Order. Whenever it took place, we are assured that even thus early he had begun to be regarded as one of the bright lights in a province which abounded in great men of maturer years. A love for the ministry, or the active life, had led him, during his student days, to pay special attention to Scripture, which fits one so well for such a career. Nature also blessed him with rare powers of eloquence. For these reasons, although he might have shone as a professor in any studium of the Order or university, his superiors assigned the young priest to the work of preaching. To this duty he now devoted himself with an energy which soon made him one of the noted orators of the Iberian Peninsula.

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[3]This is the date given by all three of the histories of Saint Stephen's published by Cuervo, whose authors must have seen the book of professions with their own eyes. This fact should be borne in mind, for it shows those to be in error who say that de Beteta came to America in 1528 or 1529.

At this time, it will be recalled, all Spain pulsed with the reports that steadily arrived from its transatlantic possessions, and told of the crying need of harvesters of souls among the Indians. Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, a mother of splendid American missionaries, received appeal after appeal for help from her sons in the New World. Father Gregory de Beteta, thus impelled to consecrate himself to that field of labor, offered his services for it. His proffer was accepted, and he soon sailed for Mexico which he reached at a now unknown date. However, the time of his Religious profession, September 29, 1533, shows that it could not have been much before 1540. He took up the study of the language of the aborigines with characteristic promptness, mastering it in the briefest period.[4]

Then began an apostolic career which lasted for more than twenty years for one of the most remarkable of the many great harvesters of souls whom Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, or even Spain, sent to the New World. All Mexico seems to have been the field of his tireless activity. The capital city and Oaxaca were the chief centers from which he labored. Through mountain fastness, no less than from town to town, he made his way afoot in ceaseless search for souls. Many a Spaniard who had grown remiss in the practice of his religious duties was reconciled with God.

But the Indians were the principal object of our Friar Preacher's solicitous care. Thousands of them were brought into the fold of Christ through his ministrations. He loved the aborigines with his whole heart and soul. They regarded him as an angel of light, flocked to him as a guide, a father, and a protector. Undoubtedly he was among the many Fathers who distinguished themselves so signally by their services during the Indian epidemic of 1545, in which myriads of natives and more than a score of his confrères lost their lives.

Father Gregory de Beteta was one of those men who are too big and useful to be tied to any particular locality. He wished to be free for his work of saving souls. This is why we find no mention of him holding the office of superior. His place was everywhere, and no one seems to have sought to curtail his apostolate by appointment or election to a post that would interfere with his broad activity.

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[4]Groot (*op. cit.*, I, 7-8) and others, who seem to follow Father Alphonsus Zamora's "Historia de la Provincia de Santo Antonino del Nuevo Reyno de Granada" (we could find no copy of it) are in error, when they say he came in 1528 or 1529. See the preceding note.

Despite the continual contact with the world imposed by his ministry, de Beteta never lost sight of his state of life, or in the least abated its austerities. Ever and always was he a model religious, an example of sanctity, and object of admiration for his constancy. No toil, privation, trial, or hardship was so great that he would not readily undergo it in behalf of a soul, or the good of religion. The vow of poverty, as well as those of purity and obedience, he practised with the utmost fidelity. During all the years he spent in Mexico and other parts of the New World, he was never known to wear a new habit or mantle, for he always managed to obtain one which some confrère had laid aside because of its condition. Nevertheless, he was of a cheerful disposition; his temperament uniformly calm, kind, and gentle. It is no matter for surprise, therefore, that he enjoyed the confidence, love, and esteem not merely of his brethren, but also of every one without the Order. The Mexican hierarchy trusted him implicitly—used him in manifold ways.

No doubt the glorious achievements of Father Louis Cancer and his associates in Tuzulutlan, or The Land of War, for they were known everywhere, combined with the belief that Florida was inhabited by vast hordes of aborigines to turn de Beteta's thoughts towards the northern shores of the Gulf of Mexico. At least he and Father John Garcia, who seems to have been his co-laborer on the lower Mexican missions for a while, determined, with the permission of their superiors, to attempt alone a peaceful and spiritual conquest of those parts similar to that which had been accomplished by their confrères in the mountainous regions of Guatemala. The two apostolic men felt that they could consecrate their energies to no nobler project, or die in no holier cause. They were convinced that, unless they were brought into the Faith and placed under the protection of religion in this way, the Floridians would soon become victims of bloody wars, nay, subjected to all the evils of slavery. Should they suceed, the missionaries knew well, it would not be difficult to procure other self-sacrificing comrades to aid in the new field of labor, or to perpetuate the work of saving souls.

The Spaniards, it is true, had fared badly at the hands of the Indians north of the Gulf of Mexico; but so had they been repeatedly driven from the mountains of Tuzulutlan until the appearance of the Friars Preacher there, with the sole swords of the Gospel, peace, and prayer. Hardships, privations, toils, even dangers, the two missionaries expected without measure. But what mattered this? They had given themselves to God; for

Him they were ready to suffer—nay, to die. For trials and perils, in which they had long lived, they had no fear. The comforts and consolations of home they had forsworn years agone.

Because of the general lack of knowledge of the geography of the country, Fathers de Beteta and Garcia believed, as they had been told, that Florida lay much nearer their part of Mexico than it does, and that it could be reached by land more easily than by water. Indeed, de Beteta seems certainly to have come up to the former Montezuman capital from his labors on the missions in Oaxaca, Guerrero, and Puebla for that purpose. He and Garcia, drawn together by the bond of zeal, then received their superior's blessing, and started on their long journey afoot. This would appear to have been late in 1545 or early in 1546. Apparently the civil authorities declined to aid the pious enterprise. The story of the effort has been told in the sketch of Father John Garcia. Suffice it here to say that, after several months of unspeakable suffering and futile exertion, the two were obliged to give up the overland project.

However, this failure, full of disappointment though it was, did not lessen their determination to get to Florida. They now turned their thoughts to a journey by water. This was evidently the frame of mind in which Father Louis Cancer de Barbastro found them, when he arrived at Mexico City from Tuzulutlan, in the second half of 1546. It is quite possible that he had discussed the question of Florida's peaceful conversion with them at an earlier date in some of the more southern missions. Now, at any rate, it seems sure that it was agreed that the apostle of Tuzulutlan, who was on his way to the mother-country, should take up the subject with the Spanish court, and secure a *cedula* as well as royal authorization for the plan.

For the sake of brevity, we pass over the rest of the history of this spiritual adventure, glorious even in its failure. An account of it has been given in the sketch of Father Cancer.

After the death of Father Cancer, apparently about where now stands the City of Tampa, June 26, 1549, the leadership seems to have fallen to de Beteta. He and Father John Garcia, the only two left of the little missionary band, endeavored to induce the captain of their vessel, John de Arana, to take them to some other port that they might make another effort to tame and convert the Floridian savages. Their entreaties were of no avail with the headstrong man. So they were obliged to return to Santa Cruz, which they reached on July 19, 1549, some four months after they

had left the same place on their ill-fated journey.[5] There is no record in history of a nobler, a braver, or a more heroic effort in the cause of Christianity. Their disappointment, no doubt, was keen; but they did not suffer it to chill their zeal for the salvation of the red man.

All the outlines of the life of Father Gregory de Beteta, which we found here and there, are excessively brief. They touch only a few of the salient points or facts of his career, which every one says was truly extraordinary. For this reason, in default of original documents, it is impossible to write a really satisfactory sketch of him, or even to place the events we know in their proper chronological order. We hope that some future student may unearth material which will enable him to present the world with a story that will make the servant of God shine in generations to come even as he shone in his own day.

No sooner did our missionary regain Mexico than he resumed his universal apostolate. He still gave by far the greater part of his time and attention, as well as his tenderest affections, to the oppressed Indians. His closest friends seems to have been those who were most zealous in the same cause. This it was that bound him to Garcia, Cancer, de Peñalosa, and Fuentes. It brought him into intimate contact with Father Dominic de Salazar, later the first Bishop of the Philippine Islands. Indeed, de Beteta longed to go back to Florida; but as that field appeared hopelessly closed to him, for the time being at any rate, he was constantly on the outlook for another, where his services might be more needed for the aborigines than in Mexico, or New Spain.[6]

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[5]It will be recalled from the sketch of Cancer that the martyr himself left us an account of this spiritual expedition almost up to the time of his death; and that de Beteta filled out and annotated the record.

[6]The fact that the greater number of the zealous missionaries sketched in these pages belonged to the Province of Saint James, Mexico, of which Lower California formed a part, requires a notice of an anonymous and misleading review of Vol. I (second edition) of Father Zephyrin Engelhardt's "Missions and Missionaries of California," Santa Barbara, 1929. The appreciation of it (the *Ecclesiastical Review,* November, 1929, page 546) says: "Lower California was a typical Indian mother, beautiful in her early youth of the Jesuit era of the first conversions, grown squat and stolid in the middle age of the Franciscan times of consolidation of missions, and become stooped and wrinkled in the Dominican days of decrepitude, death and extinction."

If this rather obscure sentence means that the missions of Lower California, like the missions of every other Religious Order in Mexico, were destroyed, in the nineteenth century, by the baneful influence of Secularism and Masonry which soon gained the mastery in the new Mexican republic, it is correct. If it means, as it certainly seems to imply, that the missions

Such an opportunity finally offered itself in the far South. De Beteta and de Salazar were associated in this enterprise. With the permission of their superiors in Mexico, and very likely in response to a call for help from their confrères in Columbia and Venezuela, they travelled alone and afoot (whenever possible) from the Mexican capital to that torrid clime. Several writers, not inaptly, liken this journey to that which de Beteta, Garcia, Cancer, de Peñalosa, and Fuentes made to Florida in 1549. Father de Salazar was soon recalled to Mexico. But Father de Beteta evidently remained in South America, where his patient, persevering toil on the missions was as fruitful as it had been among the Aztecs, Mixtecs, and other tribes of New Spain.[7]

Humble though he was, no less than anxious to keep himself out of the public eye, Father Gregory de Beteta's labors, ability, zeal, and worth could not be hidden. The authorities in Spain, whither he had made three visits in the interests of his beloved Indians, were perfectly aware of his tireless energy, judicious temperament, and skill in the solution or management of difficulties. For this reason, sometime in 1556, he received Bulls appointing him Bishop of Cartagena, Columbia. They bore the date of September 8, 1555. He at once declined the dignity, for he sincerely felt that he was not worthy of it, as well as unable properly to fulfill its duties. However, he finally did accept it in obedience to the command of his superior.

There is no unanimity as regards de Beteta's resignation. Some say that, repenting of his acceptance, he fled north in order to escape the miter, and joined the expedition to Florida under Don Angel de Villafañe, of which we have told in previous sketches. This version is certainly erroneous. Others tell us that he first returned the Bulls; and afterwards, in order the more certainly to secure assent to his resignation, he started for Rome. When within a short distance of the Eternal City, he received word that

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of Lower California failed through the neglect or misgovernment of the Friars Preacher, it represents nothing more than a little mind trying to play big with words. Moreover, taken in that sense, it is a positive distortion of the narrative of the noted Franciscan historian, who says (page 587): "From the mission reports we learn that the Dominicans [in Lower California], despite the many drawbacks of the country, exhibited activity similar to that of the Franciscans in Upper California." The missions of both Calfornias dwindled at the same time, and for the same reasons. The reasons were Secularism and Masonry, over which neither Order had any control.

[7]Groot, as in note 4, places him in Columbia in 1529, which we have seen to be an error. We fancy this journey was made about 1552 or 1553.

his petition had been granted. So great was his love for the work of a simple missionary among the Indians that he retraced his steps at once, without seeing the Capital of Christendom, and reached Vera Cruz when de Villafañe was about ready to set sail. Then he joined the enterprise, for he had ever entertained an ardent desire to labor in Florida, where he believed there were vast numbers of aborigines.

The exact story of this highly interesting event in the great Friar Preacher's life, we are convinced after much reading, is as follows. From the time he left Florida with Father John Garcia, in 1549, he longed to return to that part of our country for the conversion of its natives. All the authors assure us of this fact. We are also told that the efforts to induce him to accept the miter were a long-drawn-out affair. After he had forwarded his resignation of Cartagena to the Holy See, he learned of the new decision to colonize Florida. In this he saw an opportunity of realizing the wish of his heart. In order, therefore, to expedite matters, as well as to make sure that his appeal would be granted, and that he would be allowed to go back to Florida, he determined to go to Rome for an appeal in person to the Holy Father, Paul IV, and the Master General of his Order, Father Vincent Giustiniani.

There can be little doubt but that Gregory de Beteta actually entered the Eternal City, or that he there made an oral presentation of his case. This fact is revealed by a memorandum still to be seen in the archives of the Dominican Master General, Rome. While it is not possible, with the sources at hand, to give the precise day of his arrival, he very likely reached the city about the time of the death of Paul IV, August 18, 1559. The lengthy interregnum which followed before the election of Pius IV, December 26, 1559, perhaps held him there longer than he desired to remain. The record just referred to bears the date of January 24, 1560. It is not signed; yet it is an original in the registers of the Most Rev. Vincent Giustiniani. The document reads:

> "The Rev. Father Gregory de Beteta has been confirmed by letters patent for preaching to the Indians, especially to those in the Island of Florida, and authorized to take five priests of the Order with him. Over these he shall have the authority of a conventual prior. Every one is forbidden under formal precept to place any obstacle in his way as regards this matter. Should he happen to die, the eldest [by religious profession] of those whom he chooses for the

purpose shall succeed him in the same office, and with the same authority in all things.

[Given at Rome] January 24, [1560]."[8]

As far as we have seen, the position of authority conferred on him by this document is the only one to which Father de Beteta was ever appointed in the Order. He wanted no such honors; he needed none for his chosen work, or to preserve his memory in history. Things of that kind would have lessened the harvest of his apostolate, without adding to the esteem in which he was held, or to the affection which he so richly deserved. In the present instance, after his resignation of the miter of Cartagena, the Master General no doubt insisted that he should be the superior of the little band of missionaries whom he wished to gather around him. Possibly he accepted the post in part under obedience, and in part because he saw in it the surest way of getting back to Florida, the field of labor which seems to have made the strongest appeal to his zeal. Doubtless he would have even readily taken a bishopric there, had it been necessary to realize his purpose.

Delighted to be free of the burden of the See of Cartagena, and armed with Father Giustiniani's authorization to return with co-laborers to the land watered by the blood of Cancer, de Peñalosa, and Fuentes, he hurried back to Mexico. Evidently he sent word ahead to his confrères in New Spain that he was on his way to aid in the project of Florida's conversion. From Viceroy Louis de Velasco we learn that he reached Santa Cruz late in April, or early in May, 1560. Thence he hastened on to the Mexican capital with the declared intention of lending his efforts to the work at once. De Velasco was highly pleased with this information. Indeed, one of the viceroy's letters given in the lately published "De Luna Papers" would indicate that de Beteta left Vera Cruz for Saint Helena, via Santa Maria, with Captain James (Diego) de Biedma, but was driven back to his starting point by a storm, in which the vessels were caught on their way from the Floridian port. However, other statements in de Velasco's own letters seem to render this quite improbable.[9]

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[8]The document is in the Register of Father Giustiniani at the beginning of 1560. Florida was still generally supposed to be an island, which explains why it is so styled in the document. Among the Friars Preacher a number of things are regulated by seniority or age in religious profession. In his "Series Episcoporum," page 141, Father Gams mentions de Beteta's appointment as Bishop of Cartagena, but does not seem to be aware that he resigned the see without being consecrated.

[9]See "The Luna Papers," I, 111, 125, 127, 129; II, 139, 157-159, 163.

Father Davila y Padilla's history says very positively that Father Gregory de Beteta reached Santa Maria with Angel de Villafañe two days after Palm Sunday, 1561; which would place his arrival there on April 1, that year. We are very much inclined to think that this is the correct date. Meanwhile, as may be seen from the viceroy's letters to Tristan de Luna y Arellano, he busied himself in every way about the undertaking. He was at Santa Cruz when Father Peter Martín (or of Feria), the vicar provincial, reached there on his return from Florida. This was in late August or early September, 1560. The two Friars Preacher then went to Mexico City together to consult the Viceroy, whose letters show the great esteem in which he held the former Bishop-elect of Cartagena. Indeed, de Velasco expected great things of him in Florida for both the Spaniards and the Indians.

Whether Father Gregory de Beteta ever exhibited in Mexico the document which he brought from the Order's Master General we do not know. Under the circumstances, for the Mexican provincial, Peter de la Peña, was ardently in favor of the enterprise, it was not necessary for him to show it; and it would be very much in keeping with his character, in such a case, to let no one know anything about the matter. Besides, with Father Dominic de la Anunciación and Father Dominic de Salazar already in Florida, and Father John de Contreras and Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios delegated to accompany him, he had almost the quota of men which the General had authorized him to take. In default of the least documentary indication to the contrary, we are strongly disposed to believe that he remained silent about his commission, and acted in whatever capacity the provincial of Mexico designated.

The story of the rest of the unsuccessful attempt at colonization, after Father de Beteta's arrival at Santa Maria, has been told in the sketch of Father John de Contreras. From the two confrères and others whom he met on the gulf coast, of course, the brave missionary received confirmation of what he had already heard in Mexico from the returned priests about the small number of Indians seen in Florida, where he had fancied there were myriads of them. He tarried at the port only a short time. Father Dominic de Salazar and Brother Matthew de la Madre de Dios stayed there with a small detachment to await the results of the further investigation along the eastern shores. Possibly hoping against hope, Father de Beteta, accompanied by Fathers de Contreras and Dominic de la Anunciación, sailed with the new gov-

ernor, Don Angel de Villafañe, for Havana. Thence the wayworn de la Anunciación returned to Mexico. But de Beteta and de Contreras continued with de Villafañe up the Atlantic Coast.

One may easily draw a mental picture of the feelings which must have filled the zealous, tender heart of the veteran missionary as he passed, while on the way from Santa Maria to Havana, the territory formerly visited by himself, Cancer, de Peñalosa, Fuentes, and Garcia. Neither is it difficult to imagine with what care and wistful earnestness he scanned the eastern shores for evidences of Indian tribes as he journeyed north with de Villafañe. On and on they went, as told in the sketch of Father John de Contreras, at least as far as Saint Helena, or the present Port Royal Sound, in southeastern South Carolina. According to one witness, they crossed the thirty-fourth degree of latitude, which would place them off the coast of North Carolina.[10]

These searches brought the party of explorers to the same conclusions as those which the followers of Tristan de Luna y Arellano had formed of the country from their experiences on the gulf coast and inland. That is, the aborigines were few and scattered; the land was without gold, silver, or other wealth; the soil offered little or no promise for a successful colony. Governor de Villafañe and his counsellors, therefore, felt that an enemy nation would hardly seek to take possession of this northern territory, to prevent which had been the main purpose behind the Spanish sovereign's order for its settlement. For this reason, they decided that the project should be abandoned, at least until the receipt of further instructions.

Now fully convinced that he had been wrong in his belief that hordes of red men roamed the forests of Florida, as well as that but little, if any, good could be accomplished there by missionary efforts, Father Gregory de Beteta regretfully concurred in the above opinion. Father John de Contreras agreed with him. For the two to have tried to remain in the country alone would have been foolhardy and useless. Past experience had proved that. Accordingly all hands retraced their steps, via Hispaniola and Havana, for Mexico, which they reached before the close of 1561. It was another glorious exploit that, through no fault of the missionaries, ended without success.[11]

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[10] *Ibid.* II, 297.

[11] We have seen no positive statement that Father de Beteta made this journey with de Villafañe. Yet it is certain that he did. He went from Pensacola Bay to Havana with the new governor for this very purpose. The facts that this was the zealous missionary's third effort towards the

Father Gregory de Beteta's extraordinarily robust constitution, which he never spared or rested, had now become undermined by labors. He does not seem to have been an old man, for a Spaniard; but he was aged by toil, hardship, and exposure. Possibly the hope to live to help in bringing under the yoke of Christ the vast numbers of Indians who, he thought, lived in the territory then called Florida had sustained his strength so long. The last journey thither satisfied his mind. Unable to continue at work in the New World, he returned to Spain. There he made his home at the Convent of Saint Peter of Verona (commonly called Saint Peter Martyr), Toledo. At this historic priory, as he had done wherever he lived, he edified all by his holiness of life. He preached a little, but soon became sick. During the month of December, 1562, he died in the odor of sanctity. In Spain and Spanish America his name is still held in benediction. He deserves a conspicuous place in the ecclesiastical annals of the United States for his heroic efforts to bring the light of the Faith to our southern shores. Possibly no other in Father Franco's list of saintly confrères more richly deserves a place there.

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conversion of Florida, that he had longed for many years to labor there, and that he hurried back from Rome in 1560 armed with authorization for precisely this work leave no doubt but that he continued with de Villafañe as long as there was a ray of hope for the enterprise. With de Beteta certainly went de Contreras (see sketch of him). The party had practically completed their explorations and concluded that there was no promise of success, when they were caught in the storm which carried them to the south.

THE RIGHT REV. JOHN DE LAS CABEZAS Y ALTAMIRANO[1]

As our readers have doubtless noticed in the previous sketches, from the time of the discovery of Florida by John Ponce de Leon, in 1512 or 1513, the Spaniards made attempt after attempt to colonize the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico and the southeastern Atlantic seaboard. Many things seem to have conspired to render futile, in that part of our country, the efforts of conquerors who had practically never suffered defeat in what is now known as Hispanic America. Indeed, the expeditions of de Leon, Francis

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[1]SOURCES: Rev. Paul Clodoald Mercier transcripts from Archives of the Vatican, Rome, and Irene A. Wright transcripts from the National Archives, Seville, Spain (both in Archives of Saint Joseph's Province, Washington); Woodbury Lowery transcripts, Congressional Library, Washington; Barcia, *op. cit.*, 45-175; Barrientos, Bartolomé, "Vida y Hechos de Pero Menendez de Auilés, Caualero de la Hordem de Sanctiago, Adelantado de la Florida" (a sixteenth century—about 1568—manuscript published by Genaro García, as below); Calcano, Francisco, "Diccionario Biografico Cubano," New York, 1878, pp. 138-139; Calle, Juan Diez de la, *op. cit.*, folioes 11 (marked 13), 23, 24, 116, and page 4 of "Memoriale" at end of book; Connor, Jeannette Thurber, "Colonial Records of Spanish Florida," I, Deland, 1925, *passim*; Cuervo, *op. cit.*, I, 308, II, 270 ff, III, 551 ff; Davila, Gil Gonzales, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 161-162, II, folioes 101-102; Fontana, *op. cit.*, pp. 183, 200; Fuentes y Gusman, Francisco Antonio, "Historia de Guatemala ó Recordación Florida" (a seventeenth century manuscript published by Justo Zaragosa), Madrid, 1883, II, 201-202; Garcia, Genaro, "Dos Antiguas Relaciones de la Florida," Mexico City, 1902 (the first "Relación" is that of Barrientos, as above); Hernaez, *op. cit.*, I, 104, II, 27-28, 101, 178-187; *Historical Magazine* of October and November, 1861 (V, 292-294, 327-330); Lowery, Woodbury, "Spanish Settlements within the Present Limits of the United States, 1562-1574," New York-London, 1911, *passim*; Pezuela, Jacobo de la, "Diccionario Geografico, Estadistico, Historico de la Isla de Cuba," Madrid, 1863, I, 216, and "Historia de la Isla de Cuba," Madrid, 1868, I, 339 ff; Remesal de, *op. cit.*, pp. 742-743; Ruidías y Caravia, Eugenio, "La Florida, Su Conquista y Colonización por Pedro Menendez de Avilés," 2 vols., Madrid, 1893 (Vol. I contains the work of Solís, see below; Vol. II is the correspondence of Pedro Menendez, etc.); Saco, José Antonio, "Colección de Papales Cientificos, Historicos, Politicos, y otros Ramos, sobre la Isla de Cuba," Paris, 1858, II, 397; Shea, "Indian Missions," pp. 53-65, "Church in Colonial Days," pp. 133-160, and "Ancient Florida," in Winsor, *op. cit.*, II, 260-283; Solís de Merás, Gonzalo, "Memorial que Hizó el Doctor Gonzalo Solís de Merás de todas las Jornadas y Sucesos del Adelantado Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, su Cuñado, y de la Conquista de la Florida y Justicia que Hizó en Juan Riboa y otros Franceses (a manuscript of about 1567 published by Eugenio Ruidías y Caravía, as above); Tanner, Mathias, S.J., "Societas Jesu usque ad Sanguinis et Vitae Profusionem Militans," Prague, 1675, pp. 443-451; Torquemada, Juan de, O.S.F., "Los Veinte y Uno Libros Rituales i Monarchia Indiana, con el Origen i Guerras de los

Hernandez de Cordova, Luke Vasquez de Allyon, Panfilo de Narvaez, Hernando de Soto, Tristan de Luna y Arellano, and Angel de Villafañe were no more than a series of signal failures which entailed great loss of life and the expenditure of immense treasure.

Missionaries of one kind or another accompanied all these enterprises. Unfortunately, the thoughtless cruelty of Spanish marauders, who had at various times visited the Floridian country, put many of its inhabitants to the sword, and carried off hundreds as slaves, had not merely filled the Indians with a fear of the white man, but even begotten a spirit of implacable hatred in them. This antagonism was largely responsible for the martyrdom of a number of the missionaries who sought only the conversion and salvation of the aborigines in those parts. The same animosity rendered it impossible for the priests who were with the expeditions to evangelize the natives, although this was one of the reasons why they accompanied the adventurers.

The Dominicans were among the first, as well as among the most numerous, of the early missionaries associated with the projects for the subjugation of Florida. Undoubtedly they were chosen for the perilous task not less because of their friendship and sympathy for the Indians than because of their zeal and courage. The explorations of Tristan de Luna y Arellano and Angel de Villafañe, recounted in the nine immediately preceding sketches, dispelled the illusions of an enormous population and a marvellously rich country. They also finally convinced the Spanish civic authorities that no rival European nation would be likely to undertake to colonize Florida; and that, therefore, any further attempt to subjugate the inhospitable tribes there would not be worth the sacrifice of life and treasure which it would involve.

Accordingly, it was a rude shock to Philip II, when he heard that a band of Frenchmen had actually taken possession of a part of Florida. This was in 1562, within a twelvemonth after the return of Angel de Villafañe. The settlement was even started on Saint Helena Sound, where de Villafañe had been instructed

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Indios Ocidentales, de sus Poblaciones," etc., ed. of Madrid, 1723, III, 350-354; Trelles, Carlos M., "Ensayo de Bibliografía Cubana de los Siglos XVII y XVIII," I, Matanzas, 1907, 115 ff; Valdes, José Antonio, "Historia de la Isla de Cuba y en especial de la Habana" (Vol. III of the series known as "Los Primeros Historiadores de la Isla de Cuba"), Havana, 1877, pp. 454-455; *Revista de Cuba* (article "Historiadores de Cuba" by José Antonio Echeverría), VII, 381-397; *Revista Cubana* (article "Los Primeros Poetas de Cuba" by Nestor Ponce de Leon), XV, 385-399; *Catholic Historical Review* (our article "The Right Rev. Juan de Las Cabezas de Altamira"), II, 400-414, and "Documents," 442 ff.

to establish a colony. The newcomers gave the body of water the name of Port Royal Sound, which it still bears. English and French privateers and pirates were then merciless foes of Spanish commerce. They showed no quarter to the Spaniards, whether on land or at sea. A few years before this time, Jacques de Sorie, a French corsair, had sacked and burned Havana, butchered many of its inhabitants, and hanged his prisoners amidst the ruins. Puerto Rico, Cartagena, and other places had suffered similar disasters at the hands of various lawless freebooters of the same country.

To Philip II it was evident that France could be permitted to settle Florida only to the great detriment of Spain's American interests, perhaps even at the risk of the loss of some of her colonies, which had been established at the sacrifice of many lives and much treasure. He therefore determined to drive the French from their foothold in Florida, and, at any cost, permanently to plant the standard of Spain there. This he felt was the only way to protect his other possessions in the New World. He found a willing and competent leader for such an enterprise in Peter Menendez de Avilés. Menendez, one of the ablest naval commanders of his age, had already rendered conspicuous services in America. His only son and the last direct male scion of his ancient family had been in a shipwreck on the coast of Florida; and the father was then in Spain for the purpose of obtaining the royal permission to raise a fleet to go in search of his lost heir, whom he hoped to rescue. Thus Philip and Menendez quickly came to an agreement.

Spurred on by paternal affection, no less than by a spirit of chivalry and patriotism, Menendez set to work at once with vigor to gather a strong force for his commission. However, possibly in part because the resources of Spain were overtaxed by other matters, it was not until August 28, 1565, that he arrived at his destination. To the fort which he hastily threw up he gave the name of Saint Augustine, in honor of the great Bishop of Hippo, on whose feast-day he reached our shores. This was the origin of Florida's oldest city.[2]

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[2]Menendez himself says he reached the coast of Florida about midday, Sunday, August 25 ("Ruidías y Caravía," II, 75). However, he seems to have been a better soldier than chronicler; for in 1565 August 25 fell, not on Sunday, but on Saturday. Besides, his brother-in-law, Gonzalo Solís de Merás, says the coast was reached on August 28 (*ibid.*, I, 69). Similarly, Father Francis Lopez de Mendoza, the chaplain of the fleet, who kept a diary of the events, says the coast was reached on "Tuesday, August 28" (*ibid.*, II, 445-446). Shea detected Menendez' error; but Lowery (p. 153) accepted it.

Meanwhile the French settlement, which was started at Saint Helena, or Port Royal Sound, had failed. But another had been begun on the Saint John's River, where Fort Caroline was erected, only a short distance north of Saint Augustine. Menendez was quick of action, as well as of decision. On September 21, 1565, he surprised and captured Fort Caroline. After the custom of that cruel age, its garrison were put to the sword. A few days later, the remnants of a large force of Frenchmen, sent out under John Ribaut (or Ribault) in aid of this incipient Huguenot colony, appeared before the Spanish Fort Saint Augustine determined on its destruction. However, they were defeated, and met with the same fate as their fellow-countrymen at Fort Caroline.

One can hardly justify these acts of Menendez, for retaliation is ever wrong. Yet they were not altogether without excuse. Those authors who represent him as a monster, while they overlook, or attempt to palliate, equally atrocious deeds of the French and the English, do not play the part of honest, candid historians. It was the cruel way of a cruel period, which must not be forgotten when forming our judgment of the men of that day. Had Ribaut been the victor, the Spaniards would have been accorded the very same treatment which they gave the French. Yet there have been writers, who, in that case, would have passed over the incident with little or no censure, even if it were not recorded with some measure of praise. Our libraries abound in such unfair history. Possibly no other civilized nation has been subjected to quite so much of this sort of prejudice as the Spanish.[3]

A number of Franciscans and Jesuits, a member of the Order of Mercy, and four secular priests left Spain with the expedition under Peter Menendez de Avilés. However, the fleet was scattered by a storm; some of the vessels returned to the home land, and only the four *clerigos* (or secular clergymen) seem to have reached their destination. These were on Menendez' own boat, and continued their way with him from Puerto Rico, where he was obliged to halt. They were apparently alone in their ministrations at Saint Augustine for about a year. In 1566 other missionaries arrived, among whom were the two Dominicans mentioned in the sketch of Brother Peter de Estrada. We could not discover their names.

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[3]Some of our American writers have vied with the English in this unkindly feeling towards the Spanish. One is glad to see signs that this unreasonable prejudice is on the wane.

Governor Menendez was anxious to restore the foothold on the Chesapeake Bay which had been relinquished by the followers of Luke Vasquez de Ayllon. Accordingly, almost immediately after the coming of these clergymen, he despatched a company of his men to restore the former post on the James River, Virginia. Doubtless because their confrères had already been there, or perhaps even at their own request, he selected the Friars Preacher for the clerical element of the undertaking. But the officers in charge of the enterprise, after leaving Saint Augustine, changed their course and returned to Seville.[4]

Three Jesuits, two priests and one brother, were sent to Florida by Saint Francis Borgia 1567. One of them, Father Peter Martinez, had hardly landed before he received the crown of martyrdom. The next year, 1568, a larger band of missionaries of the same Order arrived, beginning their work among the Indians at once. Three others came in 1570. In the fall of this latter year (1570), no doubt in part to carry out the wishes of Governor Menendez to plant colonies farther north, two Fathers and some Brothers proceeded to the shores of the Chesapeake Bay for the purpose of establishing missions. All of these were martyred in the February of 1571; while those who remained farther south were overwhelmed with hardships. For this reason, they were soon sent to establish a province of their Society in Mexico.

For the next few years there appear to have been few missionaries in Florida to look after even the spiritual welfare of the

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[4]It was Gonzalo Solís de Merás ("Ruidías y Caravía," *op. cit.*, I, 258) who started the ridiculous story that these Dominicans, having had a taste of life in Florida, persuaded the captains and soldiers of this expedition to continue their course to Spain, where they spread all kinds of evil reports about the colony and those responsible for its establishment. Barcia (*op. cit.*, p. 123), Lowery (*op. cit.*, p. 259), and others have swallowed Solís' statement with amazing credulity. Shea's keener insight ("Church in Colonial Days," p. 142) detected the fabrication; and he placed the defection on the shoulders of the captain, where it belongs. The Spanish conquests in America often suffered in this way, not from the missionaries, but from disappointed or ambitious civil officers, both high and low.

As may be seen from his own words, Solís de Merás, a brother-in-law of Menendez, was somewhat jealous of the more prosperous colonies, and anxious to place his kinsman in the best light possible. Likely, too, he nourished a little animosity towards the Friars Preacher. So he chose to make these two responsible for the failure of the expedition to the Chesapeake Bay. The history of the Province of Saint James, Mexico, to which one of them at least belonged, is proof positive of the story's untruthfulness. Besides, Martín (or de Feria), de la Anunciación, de Salazar, de Beteta, and others had but lately returned to Mexico from Florida. From them those who went to the aid of Menendez knew well the hardships they would have to face, when they offered their services to the enterprise.

Spanish conquerors. Little could be done for the conversion of the natives, the greater number of whom were hostile to the white settlers. A thoroughly Christian man himself, the governor left nothing undone in order to obtain missionaries for them. Why we do not know, unless it was the difficulty of procuring the means of subsistence, he found it hard to procure such help. Possibly the Theatines, a new Religious Order approved by Clement VII in 1524, were the first to come to his aid. Doctor John G. Shea somehow overlooked the work of these Fathers in Florida. How many there were, or how long they stayed, we could not ascertain; but they certainly labored in the peninsula for a time.[5]

The next messengers of the Gospel were the Franciscans, who came in 1577. Their arrival was the harbinger of a brighter religious outlook for the colony. Their labors were both hard and perilous. Indeed, more than one of them won the martyr's crown. Yet patient, persevering efforts brought success to their zeal. Through them many of the Floridian aborigines entered the fold of the Faith. As the sons of Saint Francis increased in numbers, through new arrivals from Spain, they took charge of one Indian settlement after another, whether on the mainland or on the adjacent islands, until they were to be found toiling almost wherever Spanish influence was felt. The church at Saint Augustine, the chaplaincy at the fort, and Nombre de Dios seem to have been ordinarily reserved for the secular clergymen on the mission. Yet these places were evidently filled at times by Religious priests.[6] All in all, and in the then undeveloped state of things, the colony was not an inviting field of labor for missionaries.

Such, in briefest outline, is the ecclesiastical history of old Florida from the time de Luna y Arellano and de Villafañe attempted to conquer the country (1559-1561) until 1606. This latter year the colony received its earliest episcopal visitation. Those of our readers who are acquainted with the early Catholic efforts to settle north of the Gulf of Mexico will, of course, recall the little band of Franciscans with the expedition under Panfilo de Narvaez to take over Florida in 1528. All of them perished with de Narvaez. Their superior was Father John Juarez (also written Sua-

[5]Mrs. Jeanette Thurber Connor's "Colonial Records of Spanish Florida," p. 69 and *passim*, "show that the Theatines were certainly on the missions of Florida.

[6]The titles "Fray" and "Padre" before the names of some of the clergymen at Saint Augustine prove beyond doubt that they were religious. Up to this point, we have largely followed Shea's "Church in Colonial Days," in an abbreviated form; but his and other sources were carefully examined.

rez and Xuarez), who had been one of the pioneers of his Order in Mexico. Historians are divided on the question as to whether Father Juarez was actually appointed a Bishop. However, all admit that he did not receive episcopal consecration. Thus it is certain that the Right Rev. John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano, who came to the peninsula from Cuba in 1606, was the first Bishop to set foot within the present limits of the United States of America, or to exercise any episcopal functions therein. This fact of itself entitles him to a sketch in these pages, as well as secures him an honorable place in the Catholic annals of the land.[7]

John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano was born at Zamora, Spain, in 1561 or 1562. He belonged to a noble, wealthy, and truly Christian family. His father was John de Las Cabezas, an honored cavalier and a noted jurisconsult in his day. His mother Doña, Anna Catherine Calzada, also belonged to the élite of the Iberian Peninsula. From his earliest youth they drilled their beloved son in his religious duties, no less than looked after his education with the greatest care. At the University of Salamanca he completed his belles lettres and law with no little distinction.

From the university, for God gave him a religious vocation to which his early training rendered him docile, the youth of promise passed to the cloistered halls of Saint Stephen's Priory, in the same city, where he made his profession as a Friar Preacher on June 30, 1581. He now rounded out his ecclesiastical curriculum. In this part of his education he was certainly blessed with a remarkable body of professors, among whom we find the renowned Father Dominic Bañez. Philosophy and theology seem to have been de Las Cabezas' favorite subjects, although he distinguished himself in every course. Crowned, shortly after his ordination to the priesthood, with the Dominican degree of Lector of Sacred Theology, his character, talents, and industry caused him to be assigned to a chair of philosophy in the great studium of his Order at Salamanca. As a professor he was highly successful; but his labors in Spain lasted for only a few years.[8]

In those days communications between the various provinces

[7]Barcia (*op. cit.*, p. 168), following the manuscript "Historia de la Isla y Catedral de Cuba" of Pedro A. Morel, says Antonio Diaz de Salcedo, Bishop of Santiago de Cuba, visited Florida in 1595. But this is certainly an error. For the varying opinions as to whether Father John Juarez, O.S.F., was nominated a bishop see *Catholic Historical Review*, II, 404, note 5, and IV, 479 ff.

[8]The most reliable authorities on the life of John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano up to this time are unquestionably Father Cuervo's "Historiadores de San Esteban de Salamanca," II and III, as in note 1.

of the Friars Preacher in Spain and its American possessions were both frequent and intimate. Often the Fathers in the colonies asked for superiors from the mother-country. The idea back of such requests was doubtless, in part, to obtain more help, for others were sure to come with those designated for the offices to be filled. In this way, Father Louis de la Cuadra, of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, came to Hispaniola in 1592 as head of the Province of the Holy Cross. Among those whom he brought as companions in labor was the subject of this sketch, Father John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano. Hardly had he reached this side of the Atlantic, when he was again assigned to a professorial chair at the convent of his Order in the City of Santo Domingo. He seems to have been appointed the regent of studies there; nor was it long before the province honored him with the degree of Master of Sacred Theology, no less as a reward for his faithful services than because of his rare learning.

In America the future prelate showed the same indomitable industry and zeal for religion that had marked his earlier life in Spain. Quite naturally, these characteristics combined with his fine, open mind, charming manners, and kindly spirit to win him the confidence, as well as the affection, of all with whom he came into contact. But a few years after his arrival in their midst the Fathers of Hispaniola unanimously elected him for their provincial. In this capacity he attended the general chapter of the Order held at Rome in 1601. Meanwhile, the leadership of the Province of the Holy Cross had not only shown his tact and prudence in a clearer light, but also proved that he possessed rare executive ability.[9]

In those early days a bishopric in Latin America was by no means a sinecure. Indeed, it involved great care and much labor, while the emoluments were often scarcely sufficient to keep want from the prelate's door. Frequently, too, proud, ambitious civil authorities gave the ecclesiastical leaders no end of trouble. The Diocese of Santiago, which then included all the Island of Cuba, seems to have been especially beset with such difficulties. All of its bishops had been sorely tried. For this reason, from the time of the transfer, after many requests, of the Right Rev. Anthony Diaz de Salcedo from that See to Nicuragua, in 1597, the miter

[9]See the preceding note. Some writers seem to think that Father de Las Cabezas attended a general chapter in Spain; but the general chapter of 1601 was held in Rome. He simply went to Spain on his way to Rome.

of Santiago de Cuba had gone a-begging. Several clergymen declined the proffered honor.

The reputation of Father John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano as an ecclesiatic of genuine worth had preceded him to Spain. When, therefore, he arrived in that country on his way to the general chapter at Rome, Philip III turned his eyes upon the learned Friar Preacher as one who would not only have the courage to accept, but also the ability creditably to discharge, the government of the Church of Cuba. No sooner did the provincial of Hispaniola get back to his native land from the Eternal City than he received formal notice that, after the custom of the time, the Spanish sovereign had forwarded his name to Pope Clement VIII for the miter of Santiago. He reluctantly bowed to the authority of his superiors, and waited for the Bulls, which were sanctioned in the secret consistory of April 15, 1602. When they came, he received consecration in the cathedral of Madrid. Then he proceeded to Salamanca, where, with the permission of the ordinary of that city, he exercised the episcopal functions for the first time by conferring Holy Orders on a number of his young confrères of the Convent of Saint Stephen, in which he himself had entered the Order.[10]

After this ceremony, the new bishop returned to Madrid to consult the King and the royal council for the Indies about the affairs of his diocese. These matters, as they had to follow the slow processes usual in that age, held him in Spain much longer than he wished to remain there. Thus, he does not seem to have reached Cuba until September 8, 1603. Two weeks later, he wrote to Philip III from Havana to lay his earliest impressions before his Catholic majesty. A Friar-Preacher bishop was nothing new in Cuba, for Father Conrad Eubel says that the first five of the ten or eleven chief pastors of the Diocese of Santiago who preceded de Las Cabezas had been taken from the Order to which he belonged.[11]

Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, which has been frequently men-

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[10]See note 8. In his "Series Episcoporum," p. 146, Father Pius Gams, O.S.B., says Philip III sent the name of de Las Cabezas to Rome for the miter of Santiago de Cuba January 17, 1602; Calle (*op. cit.*, folio 11—marked 13) says it was on January 15. The Vatican Archives, "*Acta Consistorialia,* 1592-1605," page 329, show the date of his appointment by the Holy See.

[11]"Hierarchia Catholica Medii Aevi," III, 182. The careful Gams (*op. cit.*, p. 146) and Hernaez (*op. cit.*, II, 27) call Cuba's first bishop a Franciscan; and the latter gives him the name of de Vinte. Eubel himself was a Franciscan.

tioned in the course of these pages dates back to the early years of the Friars Preacher. It was one of their Order's first general houses of study (*studia generalia*), and was from the start intimately associated with the great University of Salamanca, giving that institution some of its most renowned professors. So has the priory given the world numbers of scholars and divines illustrious in every field of science and in every sphere of ecclesiastical and apostolic activity. One of its alumni, Diego de Deza, was a friend and adviser from whom Christopher Columbus received much assistance in his scheme of discovery.[12]

It was from Saint Stephen's hallowed cloister that Peter de Cordova, Anthony de Montesinos, Dominic de Mendoza, and scores of other Friars Preacher of equal merit (amongst them a number of those sketched in this volume) came to labor for the salvation of souls and to plant the standard of the chivalrous saint of Caleruega in the New World. Probably to no monastery of Europe does early America owe a greater debt of gratitude. During the episcopate of John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano, no fewer than seven of the sons of Saint Stephen's, Salamanca, belonged at one time to the Church's hierarchy. Two of them were archbishops, and five bishops. Nearly all of them held their posts of honor and responsibility on this side of the Atlantic Ocean. Hispanic America should never forget the hard, faithful labors of the sons of Saint Dominic in its behalf, not the least of whom was John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano.

His episcopate in Cuba was thrown along trying lines. From his immediate predecessors in the See of Santiago he inherited a spirit of strong opposition on the part of the civil authorities. However, his rare tact, honesty, and good judgment soon enabled him largely to overcome these difficulties by changing the old attitude to one of peace and harmony. Yet he was encompassed with toils, privations, hardships—even dangers. The coast towns and seaside settlements were an almost perpetual prey for the avarice of French and English corsairs who set little or no value on human life. His people lived in fear; the Bishop himself was ever in peril, whether on land or at sea. Largely in consequence of the incursions of these marauders, the diocese had not only been neglected, but had become disorganized, as well as reduced to poverty.

Just before de Las Cabezas arrived in Cuba the episcopal City

[12]Some so-called *modern* writers affect to discredit this statement about James (Diego) de Deza.

of Santiago and its cathedral had been sacked and practically reduced to ruins by French pirates. Other churches throughout the island had also been burned or plundered of everything of value. Nearly all its temples of prayer had to be rebuilt or supplied with the necessaries for divine worship. Wherever he turned, there were things which entailed much labor, worry, and expense. Yet, in spite of his rather slender resources, he did not lose courage. His travels, like his toils, were incessant.[13]

On one occasion, while making a visitation of the diocese, the Bishop stopped to spend the night at a plantation (*hacienda*) near Manzanillo, on the southern coast of the island, and some eighty miles west of Santiago. This was in April, 1604. The same day a band of French pirates, under the leadership of one Gilbert Giron, landed at the port, and sacked it. A half-breed, possibly for a small bribe, betrayed the presence of the Catholic prelate in the vicinity. Feeling that the capture of so important a personage would certainly bring him a rich reward by way of ransom, Giron led a part of his men to the plantation in the dead of night. The Bishop and his two companions, Canon Francis Puebla and Father James (Diego) Sanchez, O.P., were made prisoners. Scant courtesy was shown the three ecclesiastics. Dragged from their beds, they were taken, half-dressed and barefoot, over the several miles of rough road from their place of lodging to Manzanillo. Remesal and the historians published by Cuervo tell us that, as the plunderers had set fire to the country about the port, the captives were obliged to tread on smouldering coals for a part of the way. Brave John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano bore these tortures and ignominies without a word of complaint.

At Manzanillo the three clergymen were imprisoned aboard the ships of the sea-rovers. Then parleys for their release were opened with the people, who showed great affliction over the loss of their beloved chief pastor. Indians and Spaniards seem to have vied with one another in order to raise the amount demanded for his liberty. However, the sum exacted (variously placed at two thousand ducats, and at five thousand pesos) was so enormous for the time that it took eighty days to collect it, partly in money, and partly in merchandise. All this time the pious ordinary, Canon Puebla, and Father Sanchez, unable to gain their freedom until the ransom was placed into the hands of the pirates, were not

[13]For what has been said so far about de Las Cabezas see Calcagno; Cuervo, II and III; Davila; Pezuela, de la; Remesal, de; and Valdés—all as in note 1.

merely held in durance vile on the filthy French boats; they were likewise subjected to many cruelties. It was fortunate for the good of both the Church and the State of Cuba that, Giron, possibly lying in wait for other prey, tarried in the vicinity of his crime. Meanwhile, as word was sent broadcast, the people rallied, surprised the freebooters, killed many of them, together with their leader, put the rest to flight, and recovered all that had been paid for the restoration of their Bishop.[14]

This victory put a stop to Gilbert Giron's crimes; yet the incident we have just mentioned was not the end of the troubles of John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano with such men. Regaining his liberty, he continued his way to Bayamo and other places. On his return to Santiago, he found that the city, together with its cathedral, had again been pillaged and almost ruined. Indeed, the Cubans were all but in a state of despair because of repeated depredations by desperate pirates. Our intrepid prelate, undismayed by one misfortune after another, began at once to repair the evil that had been done, as well as to console and encourage his disheartened flock.

In addition to having a more commodious church and offering better facilities for visitations through the diocese, Havana afforded more protection against buccaneers. For this reason, Bishop de Las Cabezas early determined to have the cathedral transferred to that city from Santiago. Yet, as he was opposed in this measure by the government officials, the peace-loving man gave up the design. However, he changed his residence to Havana, where he erected the first episcopal palace in Cuba. The good prelate's affection for the common people led him to build his own home in the part of the town in which the laboring classes lived. Now he at once turned his practical mind to bettering conditions in the Cuban metropolis, and under the impulse of his influence a canal was dug to bring water into the city from a river which flowed through the neighborhood.

Several brief accounts of the Friar Preacher's episcopate in Cuba show that, while he ruled with a firm hand, he did so with

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[14]See the preceding note; Trelles, as in note 1; and *Revista Cubana,* XV, 388 ff. Some authors say that the bishop was taken prisoner at Bayamo; but this appears to be an error into which they were led because Bayamo was one of the principal ports of Cuba, and not far from the place of his capture. We have followed Silvestre Balboa y Quesada, an early Cuban poet and an intimate friend of de Las Cabezas. Balboa y Quesada wrote (1608) a poem, entitled "Mirror of Patience" (*Espejo de Paciencia*), on this episode, which he dedicated to the brave bishop himself. See Trelles, *Rivista Cubana,* and *Revista de Cuba,* as in note 1, on this poem.

marked prudence and kindliness. Nay, they reveal one who was the soul of charity and goodness and justice, a father to all, but especially to the poor, the negro slaves, and the Indians. In spite of his dignity, he did not disdain, while looking after their spiritual welfare, to come down to the level of the simple aborigines and teach them many useful practical things which tended to make life easier for them. Here he was a missionary bishop in the truest sense. He preferred to be loved rather than to be feared. Yet this desire never prevented him from doing what he felt to be his duty or for the greater good of religion. It is no wonder that he was the idol of the people in every class and walk of life. The clergy held him in no less esteem.

We have before us copies of a number of letters of de Las Cabezas to Philip III and other documents about the Bishop in the archives of Spain. They prove the above estimate of the Friar-Preacher prelate beyond the shadow of a doubt. Thus it is no matter for surprise that he is still known in Cuba as "good Bishop de Las Cabezas." Miss Irene A. Wright, while engaged on these transcripts, wrote to J. Franklin Jameson (then Director of the Department of Historical Research in the Carnegie Institution of Washington): "I confess to loving him dearly."[15] Miss Wright is not a Catholic, and her admiration was won by what she learned about him in Spanish archives.

These qualifications, so necessary for the fruitful exercise of authority, evidently combined with a fine judgment to enable our prelate to accomplish much good for both the Church and the State in Cuba; for, while first and foremost an ecclesiastic, he was also a statesman of no mean ability. His energy was tireless; his activity extraordinary; his visitations of the diocese incessant. As he passed from place to place, he noted the needs, both temporal and spiritual, of the people. The former he attended to himself. The latter he reported to the civic authorities of the island, often suggesting means of improvement. Nay, at times he laid matters of importance before the court of Spain, and used his influence there to procure assistance for the colony in many ways. All this is shown by the transcripts to which we have referred. Fortunately, his numerous beneficent services have not been completely lost to history. A man of unbounded generosity, wherever he went, he dealt out alms to those in want to the extent of his rather slender income.

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[15]The letter was dated October 29, 1916—excerpt in Archives of Saint Joseph's Province, Washington.

Possessed of great learning himself and endowed with a keen mind, the Friar-Preacher bishop deeply appreciated the advantages of education for both Church and State. He sought to provide Cuba with needed schools. Among those especially fostered by him we may mention the University of Havana, which he founded in 1605, and the Seminario Tridentino at Santiago, which he opened in 1607, shortly after his return from Florida. In this work, as in all his efforts for good, his broad-minded, liberal spirit, delicate tact, and prudence enabled him not merely to labor in harmony with the secular authorities, but even to retain their confidential friendship. This fact is the more remarkable in view of the friction between the ecclesiastical and the civic officials of the colony before and after his day.

The Bishop's intellectual gifts and high position did not prevent him from descending to minute details of organization. Indeed, it would appear that, busy as he might be, nothing was too trivial to merit his attention or to claim his time, provided it would serve to bring his flock nearer to Christ, whose cause he sought in every way to advance. In fact, one is inclined to attribute not a little of his success to conscientious care about small matters.

From the time Florida was formed into a colony by Peter Menendez de Avilés it had been included in the Diocese of Santiago, Cuba. For one reason or another, but apparently in part through fear of the English and French pirates who infested those waters, none of the predecessors of Bishop John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano had ever attempted to go to that part of their spiritual charge. More than once the Spanish sovereign had expressed a wish that an episcopal visitation should be made there, but it had not been done. Thus the Church of Florida attracted the attention of the Friar-Preacher bishop from the time of his arrival in Cuba. He shrank from no danger or hardship. However, because of the many affairs which imperatively demanded his presence on the island, it was not until 1606 that he could make his way to the northern portion of his diocese.

That the apostolic prelate regarded a visitation of Florida as a most pressing duty may be seen from the fact that, in order to hasten it, he deferred a number of things which he considered of vital importance to the Church of Cuba. For instance, he postponed a synod which he had announced for the Pentecost Week of 1606, although, since no such assembly had ever been held in the island, the diocese was in great need of one for the enactment of better ecclesiastical rules and regulations. The opening of the

Seminario Tridentino at Santiago was delayed for the same purpose. A still further proof of the keen interest he took in the Floridian missions is that, finding no other way of reaching them, he fitted out two ships at his own expense. His known practice of charity, wherever he went, leads one to suspect that a part of their cargo was intended as a means of relief for the poor whom he might encounter on his travels there.

Bishop de Las Cabezas sailed from "Yguey" (Yaguanique?), Cuba, February 25, 1606, and apparently reached Saint Augustine early in March. He set to work at once to comfort, console, and strengthen the Church of Florida. For more than three months he travelled from locality to locality, carrying out the work of an episcopal visitation, preaching, administering the sacrament of confirmation, making rules and regulations for the benefit of religion. The report of the visit sent to Spain by the royal notary, James (Diego) Davila, names nine churches and missions where confirmation was administered.

These places, in the order given by Davila's report, were Saint Augustine, Nombre de Dios, San Pedro, Lalaja, Espogasche, Puale, San Juan, Locoy (Potano), and Antonico. Two thousand four hundred and forty-four persons, in all, were confirmed. Of this number only three hundred and seventy were Spaniards; while two thousand and seventy-four belonged to the Indian race. Saint Augustine and Nombre de Dios were the only parishes where mention is made of whites receiving the Sacrament by which one is constituted a soldier of Christ.[16] Whether his labors at the time carried John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano into Georgia and to the lower coast of South Carolina we can not say. However, they probably did, for he was one who would wish to see everything with his own eyes; and, in that case, he was certainly the first prelate to tread the soil of those two States.

Confirmation was not the only episcopal function performed in Florida on this occasion. Minor orders were given to the sacristan at Saint Augustine. Whilst we find no mention of the fact, it is probable that the same favor was conferred upon some candidates for the priesthood among the Franciscans, for the Religious Orders not infrequently had unordained clerics on the missions with their Fathers. Of how the zealous prelate spent the time from March 19 to March 26, 1606, at Saint Augustine

[16]Diego Davila, Saint Augustine, Florida, to Philip III, June 26, 1606—Vol. V of the Woodbury Lowery transcripts (arranged chronologically), Congressional Library, Washington.

Don Peter de Ybarra, then governor of Florida, gives the following account. "He was occupied all Holy Week in consecrating the holy oils, chrism included, in preaching, in conferring Holy Orders, and in confirming parents, children, and grandchildren." The Minor Orders, of course, were given on Holy Saturday (March 25), which is one of the canonical times for ordination.[17] The *adalentado* then proceeds to tell the King of Spain how de Las Cabezas visited all the provinces of the colony and performed the same good offices (except ordination) for the people everywhere. There can scarcely be any doubt but that this was the first time that any of these various episcopal functions were exercised within the present limits of the "Land of Stars and Stripes."[18]

Another portion of de Ybarra's account of the apostolic Friar Preacher's stay in Florida gives a beautiful picture of his zeal and character, as well as shows how he won the heart of every one. Here the governor, himself evidently a gentleman of piety, writes: "I assure your Majesty that the labors and dangers through which he has gone would have been impossible for him, had not his great zeal for the service of our Lord and your Majesty given him the strength for them. Spaniards and natives alike have derived much good from his instructions. His sanctity, his patience, his spirit of forbearance, the fruit that has come from his visitation, and the confidence with which it has inspired all here, your Majesty will realize from what he himself writes."

From Saint Augustine Bishop de Las Cabezas y Altamirano also sent Philip III an outline of his efforts in behalf of the Church on our southeastern shores. It is dated June 24, 1606. Both the original document and a translation of it are given in the *Catholic Historical Review* for January, 1917.[19] It reveals a person of really superior merit, both spiritual and intellectual, and shows with what scrupulous care he examined into the details of every mission.

Just how long the tireless worker remained in Florida after the completion of the visitation we have not been able to ascertain. But we fancy he hurried back to Cuba as soon as possible, for the deferred diocesan synod, the opening of the Seminario Tridento at Santiago, and other matters of importance demanded his

[17]The days for ordination generally are the Saturdays of the four ember weeks, the Saturday before Passion Sunday, and Holy Saturday. Easter Sunday fell on March 26 in 1606.

[18]Pedro de Ybarra, Saint Augustine, Florida, to Philip III, June 26, 1606—in the Lowery transcripts, as in note 16.

[19]The issue of the *Review* is January, 1917 (II, 442 ff).

presence in that portion of his charge. We are assured that he no sooner regained the island than he resumed his incessant and ubiquitous labors there. However, his spiritual stewardship over the See of Santiago was now near its close. Possibly Cuba has had no bishop from whom religion received greater benefits in the same length of time as that in which he presided over it; nor apparently have any of its prelates been more deeply or universally loved. Among the noted reforms he effected in the diocese were those in Church music and in the dignity of the divine services. He was the last Friar Preacher to wear a Cuban miter.

John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano dreaded a journey by water.[20] Philip III was aware of this, and determined to have him promoted to a better place, rather than to leave him in Cuba, or to send him to reside in Florida and preside over the Church there, as seems to have been once contemplated.[21] Accordingly, in June, 1610, Philip forwarded his name to the Holy See as the one whom he had selected to be the successor of a confrère of his Order, John Ramirez, in the bishopric of Santiago de Guatemala.

For some reason or other, and as often happened in early Latin America, there was a long interval between his transfer to Santiago de Guatemala and his taking possession of that diocese. The delay was certainly not on the part of Rome, for Paul V approved the proposal of Philip III on July 21, 1610. Less than a month later (August 17), a brief in regard to the canonical oath of fidelity, doubtless together with the Bulls of transfer, was despatched to Cuba.[22] However, possibly because held in that island by incompleted ecclesiastical business, Bishop de Las Cabezas does not appear to have entered on his new charge until sometime in 1612. A man of action, he at once set about his duties, showing the same prudence, goodness, and zeal that had characterized him in the chief pastorate which he had just relinquished.

One of his first cares in Guatemala was to master the dialect spoken by the natives there, that he might instruct them and preach to them with greater fruit. Within a few months' time, no doubt aided by his knowledge of the tongues spoken by the red men in Cuba and Hispaniola, he used that of the Guatemalans almost perfectly. Although he was an orator of note, neither this gift nor

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[20] *Catholic Historical Review,* II, 459.

[21] *Ibid.,* 453.

[22] Archives of the Secretary of Briefs (Vatican), Vol. 458, folioes 299-302, and "*Acta Consistorialia,* 1610-1624," page 14. The historians content themselves with merely giving the fact or year of the transfer.

his erudition prevented him from coming down to the level of the untutored aborigines, who were much more numerous in his new diocese than they were in his previous fields of activity in the New World. The simple catechetical instructions he gave were immensely popular among them.

In Guatemala again the Bishop was a father to all. His paternal care and solicitude continued to go out to the poor, the afflicted, the negroes, and the Indians, for he loved these classes with a tender affection akin to that of a mother. In that colony he was soon what he had been in Cuba—the idol of all races and people of every walk in life. In both dioceses his rule was marked by a singular peace and contentment amongst those over whom he exercised a kindly pastoral authority, as well as with the state officials. He had a happy faculty for harmonizing discordant elements and interests. From Father Anthony de Remesal, a contemporary of de Las Cabezas in Guatemala, we learn several interesting facts about the saintly prelate. Not only did he love ecclesiastical music; he was skilled in that science, and liked to see the ceremonies of the Church carried out with solemnity. Doubtless it was for this reason that he took a band of negro musicians from Cuba to Guatemala. No doubt, too, they had been trained under his care and used as a choir in his former diocese. At that early date, it must have been extremely difficult—often even impossible—to get white men in the American wildernesses for this important part in divine worship. The Bishop was fond of rubrics; and when at home he saw that everything in the cathedral was done in accordance with the law.

A deeply religious spirit did not keep him from being cheerful and companionable, ever ready or even glad to receive those who wished to see him. Thus, in spite of his multitudinous cares, his residence seems to have been a place of welcome to all. Yet he was of a noble bearing, and knew well how to combine dignity with a democratic temperament. His profound theological lore and broad learning gave him a high place in ecclesiastical circles; whilst his knowledge of law, clear judgment, practical wisdom, open candor, and judicious forethought caused his opinions not only to be valued, but even sought after, by the royal council of the Indies. The local authorities also held them in the highest esteem. For this reason, one may be permitted to believe that the great prelate did much to better the condition of his beloved Indians, whose welfare he ever kept in mind. Short as was his episcopate there, the Church of Guatemala was benefitted by it in many ways. For

the beautification of Santiago's cathedral he commenced a large tower, which he did not live to see completed.[23]

Arequipa, Peru, had been erected into an episcopal see as early as 1577, with Anthony Hervias, O.P., as its first Bishop; but, before he could take possession of the new diocese, he was transferred to that of Vera Paz. Arequipa seems to have been a difficult place for which to find a suitable incumbent. Thus it was not until October, 1611, that another appointment was made in the person of Christopher (Cristobal) Rodriguez, O.P. He did not live to take up his charge. Philip III now turned his eyes again towards the subject of this sketch as a man eminently qualified for so trying a position, and forwarded his name to the Holy See that he might succeed his confrère, Rodriguez. The royal council also felt that one who had shown so much zeal, prudence, and practical ability through all his life would soon effect a proper organization in that somewhat neglected part of the Church. Nor did they doubt but that his courage and patriotism would combine with his spirit of obedience to induce him to accept the change. This was in 1615. On September 16, the same year, Paul V solemnly approved the request of the Spanish monarch. The Bulls of transfer were then sent him at the Guatemalan capital.[24]

God, however, had other and better things in store for His faithful servant. Possibly, indeed, for in those days the mail service was exceedingly slow, John de Las Cabezas y Altamirano never even learned of his appointment to the See of Arequipa, Peru. Late in 1615, he was stricken with apoplexy, from which he died during the Christmas holidays—not an old man, but worn out by labor. He was buried in the Cathedral of Santiago de Guatemala. The numbers who turned out to pay the gifted prelate their last respects and to assist at his funeral attested the regard in which he was held. He left a memory that is still cherished in the two dioceses over which he so happily presided, and a name that shines in history.

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[23]Davila, Fuentes y Gusman, and Remesal, de, as in note 1.

[24]Vatican Archives, "*Acta Consistorialia,* 1610-1624," page 115; Hernaez, *op. cit.,* II, 178-187. This document and Hernaez show Father Gams (*op. cit.,* p. 139) is in error, when he places Pedro de Perea, O.S.A., in Arequipa as its bishop from 1612 to 1624. Hernaez (page 184) says de Perea was appointed Bishop of Arequipa September 5, 1617.

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